THE

LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor: R. PALME DUTT

Volume 8 March, 1926 Number 3

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

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The World of Labour :: Book Reviews

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NOTES of the MONTH

Fruits of Liverpool—Coalition Question—What Liverpool Prepared — Snowden's View — Henderson's View — What Coalition Means—Back to the Liberal Party—Exclusion Question—Local Parties Banned—Trades Councils and Labour Parties—Breaking Trade Union Solidarity—Discipline ? —Fainthearted Advice—Giving an Inch—No Coalition and No Splits.

SINCE the Liverpool Conference of the Labour Party six months ago, two new developments have taken place which are the fruits of the " spirit of Liverpool " and the inevitable results of the policy there adopted. In the first place, an important section of the leadership which was responsible for Liverpool has now openly begun to advocate a Liberal-Labour alliance as the basis of the next Labour Government. In the second place, the policy of exclusion, as was foretold from the first, has now begun to extend from individuals to whole sections of the working class movement, to old and strong local sections in leading working class areas. This realisation in actual practice of the meaning of Liverpool should awaken the whole movement to the issue in front. The capitalist attack within the working class movement, which showed itself in the Labour Government surrender, which showed itself in the Liverpool programme of denial of socialism, which showed itself in the isolation of the revolutionaries and their consequent abandonment to Government imprisonment, has now reached the stage of directly endeavouring to dismember the movement below at the same time as it is involving the leadership above in alliance with capitalism. If this policy is not defeated, it will mean that the Labour Party will inevitably go to smash in the same way as the old Liberal Party ; and in doing so, it will wreck the existing working class movement, which is built on the solidarity of the local movements and of the Trade Unions. This outlook is so serious that the

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whole fight of working class unity must be concentrated on the effort to prevent this division at the outset.

IT is sometimes suggested that the question of Coalition is not serious, that it will not be entertained by more than a negligible minority, that the Labour Party is vowed to inviolable independence, and so forth. This is certainly a complete mistake. The present policy of the Labour Party leads straight to Coalition. This is the whole meaning of Liverpool. It is true that the Labour Party in the country has been built up on the propaganda of working class independence. But the practice of the Labour group in Parliament has always been a practice of coalition in one form or another. It was so in the Asquith Coalition of 1910-1914. It was so in the War Coalition of 1915-1918. It was so in the MacDonald Coalition of 1924. And it is being prepared to be so in the next Minority Labour Government on a basis of capitalist support. This divergence between the practice of the Labour Party in Parliament and the propaganda of the Labour Movement in the country is not accident. It reflects the fact that, although the Labour Party is based upon the organised working class movement in the country, the theory and practice of its leaders has never yet corresponded to that basis and expressed the actual struggle of the working class, but has always based itself, according to their own statement, on certain Liberal democratic premises. The general principle of working class independence, on which the Labour Party was brought together, has never been applied to actual daily questions, which have always been approached from a Liberal capitalist national point of view. This basic weakness of the Labour Party theory and programme is inevitably brought out most clearly in the Parliamentary Group, which has to take a position in relation to actual daily questions that can be ignored by the propagandist of utopian "socialism in general." Hence, until this weakness is corrected by placing Labour Party policy squarely on the basis of the class struggle, a growing conflict is inevitable between official Labour Party policy and practice and the working class movement, intensifying as the issues of the struggle deepen, and leading inevitably (despite the subjective wishes of many of those who are carried along by the consequences of their own policy) to coalition

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with capitalism on the one hand, and divorce from the working class movement on the other. This is the significance of Liverpool and its sequel which is now revealing itself.

WHAT was the meaning of Liverpool? Liverpool was the ratification of the MacDonald Labour Government of 1924, and the preparation of the next Minority Labour Government. It was the attempt to adapt the Labour Party to the new situation. The old loose divergence, the riding of two horses, which had reached such a dangerous point in the episode of 1924, could not continue. In the post-war situation in England Capitalism could no longer provide the concessions to sections of the working class which afforded the basis of the old stable, peaceful Labour movement, but was compelled to launch more and more universal and concentrated attacks, driving the workers more and more towards revolutionary class struggle. The Labour Party, which before the war consisted of a Liberal leadership basing itself on the old peaceful Labour movement, was caught in the storm, and could no longer continue on the old basis. Either the Labour Party would have to throw itself into the gathering revolutionary struggle of the workers, directly taking the lead in the actual fight against capitalism, or else withdraw itself bit by bit from the working class and Socialism and enter into direct alignment with capitalism in the division of the two camps. The former required a transformation for which the movement was not yet ready, although the younger elements were moving towards it. The Left Wing was not ready. Therefore the old Liberal leadership was able to carry the latter, and to transform the Labour Party in a reactionary direction. For this change two things were necessary : first, to make the break with the working class basis, and second, to withdraw Socialism from the current programme. The first was accomplished by the exclusion of Communist workers and delegates, the full significance of which is now being revealed in the measures for the exclusion of whole sections of the organised movement ; the second was accomplished by the new programme of reconstruction and reform, shelving nationalisation and the capital levy, and explicitly providing a basis for the next Minority Labour Government to hold office with capitalist support.

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THEREFORE, Messrs. Snowden and Spoor were only a little in advance of the opportune moment, and not at all speaking only for themselves, but very accurately interpreting the Liverpool policy, when they declared for Liberal-Labour Coalition as the next step. Mr. Snowden at Blackburn declared that after the next election Liberalism might very probably have a balancing vote, as Mr. Lloyd George had suggested, and that in that case the Labour Party should reach a "temporary understanding" with the Liberal Party to "govern on an agreed programme." Mr. Snowden advocated "an alliance and an agreement and an understanding of co-operation in Parliament upon agreed measures." This is very definite language. (The quotations are taken from *The Times* report of his speech; the *Daily Herald* report appears to have mislaid this section of his speech, or else considered it insufficiently important for insertion.) What would be the character of such a programme? Mr. Snowden suggested that "they might get a very large measure of land reform; they could deal with coal and the Tory Party, with unemployment, education and housing." How any of these problems could be "dealt with" on capitalist lines (*i.e.*, on an "agreed programme" with Liberalism) Mr. Snowden did not apparently explain. Mr. Spoor suggested that the Labour Party "stands theoretically for Socialism. In reality it is working for democracy and real human freedom" (the distinction is worth noticing), and that in consesequence "we should be practical and face realities. A divided Opposition means indefinite continuance of the Tories in power, whereas a commonsense appreciation of the real issues would lead to something like fusion." When this striking statement was pressed on the attention of the *Daily Herald* by "a valued reader," the latter replied that "we noticed the article, but regarded it as having no importance." Mr. Spoor was, however, Chief Whip in the Labour Government; Mr. Snowden was Chancellor of the Exchequer. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Chief Whip of the last Labour Government, and still holding Front Bench position, express themselves so definitely on a question of policy without correction, it cannot be regarded as of "no importance."

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AND in point of fact, are the views of, say, Messrs. Henderson, Thomas, Clynes and Webb really so different from those of Messrs. Snowden and Spoor, save that they would consider it wiser not to commit themselves to any statement until after the event? What are their views on the position that will arise after the next election? They hardly expect an absolute Labour majority: indeed, their speeches on the prospect of a Minority Labour Government make this clear. They expect, or hope, that the existing Conservative majority will be replaced by a Labour and Liberal majority. They then hope to form a Minority Labour Government to govern (to govern, not to make a socialist gesture and dissolve) with Liberal support. But the Liberals have made clear that such support will not be given without an agreed bargain as to programme. The conclusion is plain. If circumstances make it necessary, the agreed bargain will be made when the time comes, and the Coalition will exist as a fact for the movement and afford a plea to excuse all sins ("office, not power"). Indeed, Mr. Henderson hinted very plainly at this in his speech at Burnley in reply to Mr. Lloyd George. He said:—

> True, no one could foresee the position of the three parties as the result of the next appeal to the people, but he could assure them it would not be for want of hard work on the part of the entire Labour Movement if Labour failed to secure a majority; but whatever happened, the Labour Party would not purchase Liberal support by a betrayal of its principles, the lowering of its ideals, or the mutilation of its programme as set out in its constitution and the decisions of its annual conference.

"Labour will not purchase Liberal support by a betrayal of its principles." Of course not. Who ever heard of a party that betrayed its principles? Mr. Henderson, with his vast experience of the War Coalition of Lloyd George and of the Secret Service administration against the Labour Movement in 1924, may be implicitly trusted to be a careful judge of this point. "Mutilation of its programme as set out in its constitution and the decisions of its annual conference." What need? The mutilation has been done already in the "decisions of its annual conference"—at Liverpool. Once Socialism has been thrown overboard (or, more politely, elevated into an ideal

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like the Sermon on the Mount), what difficulty remains? Is there anything in the Liverpool programme that a Liberal could not swallow?

WHAT would such a Coalition mean? The Labour Party exists to fight for Socialism, to lead the workers against Capitalism. But the Labour Party would be forming a Government, not to introduce or endeavour to introduce Socialism and establish working class control, but to administer for Capitalism, to administer in alliance with Capitalism, to maintain with force the existing system of subjection at home and abroad. In consequence the workers, in their conflict with Capitalism, would invariably find themselves having to encounter the Labour Government at the head of the Capitalist machine. Every aspect of the capitalist subjection they were fighting would be under the sanction of their own Labour Government. And the Labour Government, directly allied with Capitalism, with its eye on the capitalist majority in the House of Commons, with its eye on the understanding with Liberalism, could not act otherwise. An inevitable divergence and disintegration would ensue, of which the nine months of 1924 were only a foretaste. The Labour Party would be stultified. The Labour Movement would be divided against itself. Socialism and the propaganda of the Labour Party would be discredited. As with the Trade Unions after the surrender of Black Friday, as with German Social Democracy after 1919, there would be a great falling away, with the disillusionment of the masses. All the work of a generation of building up the Labour Party distinct from Liberalism, on the basis of the working class, would be thrown away. Once again the working class would be outside, and within Parliament would be a great "reform" party, claiming to speak for "the whole of the people," offering promises and hollow reforms without attacking capitalism, and in reality driving along the road of capitalism and imperialism on the basis of the impoverishment of the workers and the growing accumulation of capital to an inevitable crash and war.

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ONCE again the task of building up a mass political party of the workers would have to be taken up anew, but under different conditions. For the conditions would no longer be the same. The old Liberal Party was able to have a comparatively long run before the crash. Capitalism was still in the ascendant and only beginning to be shaken in the later years. The building up of the beginnings of political working class organisation took place under relatively peaceful conditions. Only in the final years, in 1911-1914, did the beginnings of the breaking out of the storm appear. But in the post-war period these conditions are gone. Capitalism can no longer be stable, nationally or internationally. The period of revolutionary struggle has begun. The pace of events is much more rapid, the antagonisms of capitalism and imperialism more intense, the reserves of capitalism less, the socialist consciousness of the workers stronger. The building up of the new mass political party of the workers would have to take place under these conditions of instability and desperate haste. The tasks for which it would have to prepare would have to correspond to the new revolutionary stage. And the building would have to take place on the foundations of an existing movement in the face of a leadership still claiming the allegiance of the workers, although in reality completely given over to Liberalism, and still able to hold large sections by associations of the past, traditions and discipline. The situation of the German working class movement, fatally divided between Social Democracy and Communism, and hampered by the relics of the past from responding to the revolutionary stage, would be in danger of being repeated in this country. This is the greatest danger of the policy of Coalition. The abandonment of the working class struggle by a section of the leadership means the fatal disrupting of the working class movement. Unity with capitalism means breaking the links with the revolutionary working class. The revolutionary mass party of the workers will inevitably develop in response to the needs of the present stage. But the struggle of to-day in this country is to secure that the main forces of the working class movement shall so far as possible be carried intact and united into the new stage.

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IT is for this reason that the question of exclusions in the Labour Party is of such cardinal importance at the present time. When the question of Communist exclusions was taken by the Labour Party Executive, the full significance of this question was not realised by many working class leaders. They thought that it was a question simply of a small group of individuals and certain peculiar opinions. In consequence, even where sympathetic personally and ready to uphold the viewpoint of "tolerance" in general, they did not see their way to fight the issue politically, or even recognise it as a political issue of direct concern to themselves. This was a profound mistake. The consequences of this mistake are only now beginning to be realised in the direct menace to the unity of the whole working class movement. The question of Communism in the Labour Party was, in fact, the question of the Class Struggle in the Labour Party, and, therefore, the question of the future of the Labour Party. The Labour Party Executive, in proposing to exclude Communist delegates on the ground of disbelief in parliamentary democracy, were, in fact, directly destroying the class basis of the Labour Party and endeavouring to substitute a Liberal doctrinal basis. The importance of this went very much further than the Communist Party. The attempt to impose a Liberal doctrinal basis on a working class movement, which has hitherto been organised and recruited on the basis of working class solidarity through the Trade Unions, means inevitably to disrupt that movement. The working class organisations, in proportion as they advance beyond these Liberal illusions, are automatically ejected. It stands to reason that if Communist individuals are excluded, working class organisations holding similar views are also excluded. The Communists exist within the movement, and cannot be exorcised by a resolution. Therefore, the attempt to enforce the Labour Party Executive ban means that the working class organisations, which are the units of the Labour Party, must also destroy their class basis and break their ranks. If working class solidarity is too strong to be broken, then the centre must itself make the effort to break it. So the process of disruption spreads like a plague through the movement, with a wider and wider sweep at every stage, because the original principle of disruption, which may have seemed

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so small at the outset, was not fought and prevented from the first. The growth of Communism in the working class movement cannot be prevented by a ban ; but it is possible to shatter and disrupt the working class movement by such a ban.

WHEN the proposal of Communist exclusion was first brought up by the Labour Party Executive four years ago, it was predicted in these Notes, in July, 1922, that the proposal, if carried, would have two consequences : (1) to exclude local labour parties ; and (2) eventually to exclude trade unions. The first part of this process has now begun. The Labour Party Executive announces the exclusion of three local labour parties: the Battersea Trades Council and Labour Party ; the Bethnal Green Trades Council and Labour Party, and the South-West Bethnal Green Divisional Labour Party. This is, of course, only a beginning, as many more local labour parties are involved. It is, however, quite sufficient to demonstrate the process. The Battersea movement is one of the historic centres of the socialist movement in England. Forty years ago the Socialist and working class banner was being carried forward in Battersea long before the existence of the Labour Party was brought about as a result of the efforts of the early pioneers. To-day the Trades and Labour Council focuses and organises an active working class movement which dominates the local and municipal political life, Communists and other Labour workers co-operating in the common fight. It is, indeed, one of the many significant pointers for the future of the working class movement in Britain that a typical pioneer centre such as Battersea should to-day be developing a strong Communist tendency and actively realising the united front. There is no question, here, of any lack of working class solidarity. Now, however, by an arbitrary fiat from above, from those who should be leading the way in working class solidarity and progress, this natural development of the working class movement is to be forbidden ; the working class solidarity is to be banned ; Battersea is to be cut off from the national working class movement ; and a split from outside is to be endeavoured to be made in the close-woven unity of the local movement.

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WHAT does it mean to exclude a local labour party? A local labour party is a combination of trade union branches, socialist societies, co-operative societies and individual members in a locality. The trade union branches constitute the principal membership. Thus the local labour party comprises the local working class movement. It is not an abstract political entity which can be separated from the single and undivided working class movement. Indeed, the local Trades Council and the local Labour Party is often one and the same body (it will be noticed that two of the three cases which have been excluded are "Trades Councils and Labour Parties"). In fact the constitution of the Labour Party directly advocates the unity of the local trade union and political movement in a single body :—

> RULE 8 (2b).—Where local Labour Parties and Trades Councils at present exist in the same area every effort must be made to amalgamate these bodies, retaining in one organisation the industrial and political functions.

Thus the local working class movement is a single whole. Any blow at the local Labour Party to divide its forces is a blow at the whole local working class movement, trade union no less than political. There can be no question of separation. It is this that gives the cardinal importance to the question of exclusions and splits in the Labour Party.

WHAT happens when a local Labour Party is excluded? The split is not simply a split of the local movement and the national movement. The split extends right into the fabric of the local movement. This is made clear by the official announcement following the Executive decision. The London Labour Party Executive, in pursuance of the National Executive decision, announces its intention—

> In conjunction with the Headquarters of the Party to take steps for the strengthening of the Labour Party movement in the area concerned.
>
> In these efforts we shall welcome the co-operation of every one who is willing to respect the constitution of the Party.

What does this mean in practice? New local Labour Parties will be set up in the areas concerned. But these new local Labour Parties will not be the old ones, which have refused to surrender

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their solidarity. They will, therefore, be set up on the basis of such a minority of "loyal" branches as can be secured and induced to break away from the main body. Two bodies will now exist in place of one : an "official" "recognised" minority body being split off from the main body of the movement. These bodies will not be simply two parties, representing a division of view within the working class. It will be a division of the trade union movement, and therefore a smashing of working class solidarity. The local working class solidarity which is the bedrock of the Labour movement in this country will be artifically broken up. And this split will take place, not through any local disunity, but through external agents sent down to create a split under headquarters' orders. This is the gift of the Labour Party Executive to the working class on the eve of a heavy capitalist attack. It is a crime and a disgrace, and the whole movement must unite to stop it.

THE view has sometimes been expressed that this system of splits and expulsions should be accepted in the name of "discipline." This view has even been advocated in a journal of the Left, which in general advocates working class unity. Such a view is a travesty of discipline. It means to lose completely the end (working class solidarity) in the means (discipline). To travel this road means to travel the road of the unhampered shattering of the Trade Union movement by the Right Wing leaders after the German model. That road must be barred and blocked in this country by all genuine supporters of working class unity. What is discipline ? Discipline in an army means in the last resort to keep the ranks in a fight—to keep the ranks, even though every officer has fled, shown the white feather or gone over to the enemy. Troops who are able to keep their ranks and not break up even under such conditions are spoken of as seasoned and disciplined troops. Working Class Discipline means to maintain working class solidarity in the face of every enemy. The first duty of every worker is to working class solidarity. If this is not understood, discipline becomes an instrument in the hands of the enemy, like the fettering of Liebknecht for the first six months of the war. The duty of every local Labour Party that has been expelled is to

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fight to maintain an unbroken front of working class solidarity against every attempt to split them, until help comes to reinstate them in their rightful place in the movement once more : and every working class leader worth his salt should assist and encourage them to do so.

"THE Executive Committee was within its rights," says the juridical *Lansbury's Labour Weekly*. "But we do earnestly hope that this is the last we shall hear of this topic, and that both Right and Left Wings will let it lie. There are far more important tasks before us. Nothing is more important than national trade union unity, provided that this is understood and operated in the sense of getting ready for the big united struggle that is coming." This is really wilful blindness. Local working class solidarity, which is the whole basis of trade union unity, is to be allowed to go by the board—in the name of the higher cause of trade union unity. How can there be trade union unity if it is not realised in the localities ? What is the meaning of "getting ready" if the front is being broken in the localities ? Why is "getting ready" adjudged "more important" than the United Front—as if the two things were different. But, indeed, the same issue of the same journal proceeds to define on another page what "Getting Ready" means. "Getting Ready" means, we are told :—

> Stop Wrangling. Can we not, all of us, make an honest effort to get our internal disputes squared up so as to present a united front to the common enemy ?
>
> Work for the Trades Councils. What is your Trades Council doing ? Are all the union branches in the town affiliated to it ? . . . All these things want carefully looking to well before the crisis comes.
>
> Rally round the one body in which men of all groups are used to working together—the Trade Union movement. The local Trades Council has been too long a debating society. Let us make of it a fighting reality.

Now apply this to Battersea. Battersea Trades Council and Labour Party is in process of being disaffiliated from the national movement; headquarter agents are to be sent to "reorganise" the movement, that is, to split the existing local movement and induce such trade union branches as can be secured to secede from the main body. This process is accepted without protest, and submission is urged.

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"We do hope that this is the last we shall hear of this topic" (when every one knows that it is a question, not of three, but of something more like ninety-three local labour parties already); "and that both Right and Left Wings will let it lie" (why should working class disunity be let lie?) And while this actual process of disruption in the heart of the local movements is going on and allowed to pass with expressions of pharisaic neutrality, the old watery generalisations of working class unity are trotted out: "Rally round the one body," "Stop wrangling," "Are all the union branches in the town affiliated?" &c.—without the slightest regard for their real meaning in actual practice.

IT is not a question simply of three local labour parties. The Labour Party Executive has skilfully initiated its campaign by selecting three local labour parties as if to give the impression that there is only question of an insignificant minority and so to lull attention. In reality, as is well known, something like a hundred local labour parties have committed precisely the same "offence" as the three in question, *i.e.*, the offence of maintaining working class solidarity and refusing to carry out orders of disruption. In London alone, at the Left Wing Conference in January, fifty-three local labour parties were officially represented. If "discipline" is to be maintained all the hundred and more local labour parties will have to be subjected to the same process. To do this at one swoop would arouse a storm. And therefore, to accept quietly the expulsion of three, because it is only a question of three, is to play straight into the hands of the disruptionists. Nor is it a question simply of local labour parties. Sooner or later the same question will inevitably reach the Trade Unions. As soon as a trade union goes "red," the Labour Party Executive Right Wing will endeavour to apply the same process, and so begin the break-up of the national trade union movement. It is the issue of trade union unity itself that is at stake. The real fight for trade union unity must necessarily take account of this issue, and take up from the first the maintenance of working class solidarity throughout the movement. If the Labour Party Executive endeavours to lay hands on a Trades Council and Labour Party, the General Council itself should have

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a say in the question. The hour was never more urgent for preparing the working class front ; and the work of disruption cannot be allowed to go on unchecked, pending the result of some future conference.

THEREFORE, the whole working class movement should make a firm and immediate stand on two issues which need to be laid down with absolute clearness. The first is No Coalition with Capitalism. And the second is No Splits in the Working Class. Both these dangers are visibly present ; and both —the coalition with capitalism, and the splits in the working class— are being directly worked for by the Right Wing leadership. They can only be prevented by a united Left Wing, which can mobilise the mass of working class feeling throughout the movement to check their realisation. The major issues of positive Left Wing policy are still in process of being worked out, and have still to be fought out through many stages in the Labour Party. But these two issues are of immediate urgency ; they will be readily agreed by the majority of the movement ; and both can be effectively realised if a decided stand is made from the outset by every leader and constituent organisation that is concerned for the future of the working class movement in this country. Any separation of the Labour Party and the Trade Unions is dangerous ; and the working class unity that is needed for the struggles in front must be established throughout the movement.

R. P. D.

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THE REVOLUTION IN CHINA AND IN EUROPE

By KARL MARX

(We owe it to the courtesy of Professor Riazanov, Director of the Marx and Engels Institute in Moscow, that we are able to print the original English text of the following striking article on China. Together with the two articles on India reprinted in THE LABOUR MONTHLY, *December, 1925, and the introductory article of Professor Riazanov which appeared in* THE LABOUR MONTHLY *last month, we are now able after the lapse of seventy years to appreciate the accuracy of Marx's analysis of the development of capitalism in Asia.)*

ALMOST profound yet fantastic speculator on the principles which govern the movements of Humanity, was wont to extol as one of the ruling secrets of nature, what he called the law of the contact of extremes. The homely proverb that "extremes meet" was, in his view, a grand and potent truth in every sphere of life; an axiom with which the philosopher could as little dispense as the astronomer with the laws of Kepler or the great discovery of Newton.

Whether the "contact of extremes" be such a universal principle or not, a striking illustration of it may be seen in the effect the Chinese revolution seems likely to exercise upon the civilised world. It may seem a very strange, and a very paradoxical assertion, that the next uprising of the people of Europe, and their next movement for republican freedom and economy of Government, may depend more probably on what is now passing in the Celestial Empire—the very opposite of Europe—than on any other political cause that now exists—more even than on the menaces of Russia and the consequent likelihood of a general European war. But yet it is no paradox, as all may understand by attentively considering the circumstances of the case.

Whatever be the social causes, and whatever religious, dynastic, or national shape they may assume, that have brought about the chronic rebellions subsisting in China for about ten years past, and now gathered together in one formidable revolution, the occasion

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of this outbreak has unquestionably been afforded by the English cannon forcing upon China that soporific drug called opium. Before the British arms the authority of the Manchou dynasty fell to pieces ; the superstitious faith in the eternity of the Celestial Empire broke down ; the barbarous and hermetic isolation from the civilised world was infringed ; and an opening was made for that intercourse which has since proceeded so rapidly under the golden attractions of California and Australia. At the same time the silver coin of the Empire, its lifeblood, began to be drained away to the British East Indies.

Up to 1830, the balance of trade being continually in favour of the Chinese, there existed an uninterrupted importation of silver from India, Britain and the United States into China. Since 1833, and expecially since 1840, the export of silver from China to India has become almost exhausting for the Celestial Empire. Hence the strong decrees of the Emperor against the opium trade, responded to by still stronger resistance to his measures. Besides this immediate economical consequence, the bribery connected with opium smuggling has entirely demoralised the Chinese State officers in the Southern provinces. Just as the Emperor was wont to be considered the father of all China, so his officers were looked upon as sustaining the paternal relation to their respective districts. But this patriarchal authority, the only moral link embracing the vast machinery of the State, has gradually been corroded by the corruption of those officers, who have made great gains by conniving at opium smuggling. This has occurred principally in the same Southern provinces where the rebellion commenced. It is almost needless to observe that, in the same measure in which opium has obtained the sovereignty over the Chinese, the Emperor and his staff of pedantic mandarins have become dispossessed of their own sovereignty. It would seem as though history had first to make this whole people drunk before it could rouse them out of their hereditary stupidity.

Though scarcely existing in former times, the import of English cottons, and to a small extent of English woollens, has rapidly risen since 1833, the epoch when the monopoly of trade with China was transferred from the East India Company to private commerce, and on a much greater scale since 1840, the epoch when

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other nations, and especially our own, also obtained a share in the Chinese trade. This introduction of foreign manufactures has had a similar effect on the native industry to that which it formerly had on Asia Minor, Persia and India. In China the spinners and weavers have suffered greatly under this foreign competition, and the community has become unsettled in proportion.

The tribute to be paid to England after the unfortunate war of 1840, the great unproductive consumption of opium, the drain of the precious metals by this trade, the destructive influence of foreign competition on native manufactures, the demoralised condition of the public administration, produced two things ; the old taxation became more burdensome and harassing, and new taxation was added to the old. Thus in a decree of the Emperor, dated Pekin, January 5, 1853, we find orders given to the viceroys and governors of the Southern provinces of Woo-chang and Hun-Yang to remit and defer the payment of taxes, and especially not in any case to exact more than the regular amount ; for otherwise, says the decree, " how will the poor people be able to bear it ? " " And thus, perhaps," continued the Emperor, " will my people, in a period of general hardship and distress, be exempted from the evils of being pursued and worried by the tax-gatherer." Such language as this, and such concessions we remember to have heard from Austria, the China of Germany, in 1848.

All these dissolving agencies acting together on the finances, the morals, the industry, and political structure of China, received their full development under the English cannon in 1840, which broke down the authority of the Emperor, and forced the Celestial Empire into contact with the terrestrial world. Complete isolation was the prime condition of the preservation of Old China. That isolation having come to a violent end by the medium of England, dissolution must follow as surely as that of any mummy carefully preserved in a hermetically sealed coffin, whenever it is brought into contact with the open air. Now, England having brought about the revolution of China, the question is how that revolution will in time react on England, and through England on Europe. This question is not difficult of solution.

The attention of our readers has often been called to the unparalleled growth of British manufacture since 1850. Amid the

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most surprising prosperity, it has not been difficult to point out the clear symptoms of an approaching industrial crisis. Notwithstanding California and Australia, notwithstanding the immense and unprecedented emigration, there must ever, without any particular accident, in due time arrive a moment when the extension of the markets is unable to keep pace with the extension of British manufactures, and this disproportion must bring about a new crisis with the same certainty as it has done in the past. But, if one of the great markets suddenly becomes contracted, the arrival of the crisis is necessarily accelerated thereby. Now, the Chinese rebellion must, for the time being, have precisely this effect upon England. The necessity for opening new markets, or for extending the old ones, was one of the principle causes of the reduction of the British tea-duties, as, with an increased importation of tea, an increased exportation of manufactures to China was expected to take place. Now, the value of the annual exports from the United Kingdom to China amounted, before the repeal in 1834 of the trading monopoly possessed by the East India Company, to only £600,000 ; in 1836 it reached the sum of £1,326,388 ; in 1854 it had risen to £2,394,827 ; in 1852 it amounted to about £3,000,000. The quantity of tea imported from China did not exceed, in 1793, 16,167,331 lbs. ; but in 1845 it amounted to 50,714,657 lbs. ; in 1846 to 57,584,561 lbs. ; it is now above 60,000,000 lbs.

The tea crop of the last season will not prove short, as shown already by the export lists from Shanghai, of 2,000,000 lbs. above the preceding year. This excess is to be accounted for by two circumstances. On one hand, the state of the market at the close of 1851 was much depressed, and the large surplus stock left has been thrown into the export of 1852. On the other hand, the recent accounts of the altered British legislation with regard to imports of tea, reaching China, have brought forward all the available teas to a ready market, at greatly enhanced prices. But with respect to the coming crop, the case stands very differently. This is shown by the following extracts from the correspondence of a large tea firm in London :—

> In Shanghai the terror is extreme. Gold has advanced upward of 25 per cent., *being eagerly sought for hoarding* ; silver has so far dis-

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> appeared that *none could be obtained* to pay the China dues on the British vessels requiring port clearance; and in consequence of which Mr. Alcock has consented to become responsible to the Chinese authorities for the payment of these dues, on receipt of East India Company's bills, or other approved securities. *The scarcity of the precious metals* is one of the most unfavourable features, when viewed in reference to the immediate future of commerce, as this abstraction occurs precisely at that period when their use is most needed, to enable the tea and silk buyers to go into the interior and effect their purchases, for which a *large portion of bullion is paid in advance, to enable the producers to carry on their operations.*
>
> At this period of the year it is usual to begin making arrangements for the new teas, whereas at present nothing is talked of but the means of protecting person and property, all transactions being at a stand. . . . . If the means are not supplied to secure the leaves in April and May, the early crop, which includes all the finer descriptions, both of black and green teas, will be as much lost as unreaped wheat at Christmas.

Now the means for securing the tea leaves will certainly not be given by the English, American or French squadrons stationed in the Chinese seas, but these may easily, by their interference, produce such complications, as to cut off all transactions between the tea-producing interior and the tea-exporting sea ports. Thus, for the present crop, a rise in the prices must be expected—speculation has already commenced in London—and for the crop to come a large deficit is as good as certain. Nor is this all. The Chinese, ready though they may be, as are all people in periods of revolutionary convulsion, to sell off to the foreigner all the bulky commodities they have on hand, will, as the Orientals are used to do in the apprehension of great changes, set to hoarding, not taking much in return for their tea and silk, except hard money. England has accordingly to expect a rise in the price of one of her chief articles of consumption, a drain of bullion, and a great contraction of an important market for her cotton and woollen goods. Even *The Economist*, that optimist conjuror of all things menacing the tranquil minds of the mercantile community, is compelled to use language like this :—

> We must not flatter ourselves with finding as extensive a market for our exports to China as hitherto . . . It is more probable that our export trade to China should suffer, and that there should be a diminished demand for the produce of Manchester and Glasgow.

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It must not be forgotten that the rise in the price of so indispensable an article as tea, and the contraction of so important a market as China, will coincide with a deficient harvest in Western Europe, and, therefore, with rising prices of meat, corn, and all other agricultural produce. Hence contracted markets for manufactures, because every rise in the prices of the first necessaries of life is counterbalanced, at home and abroad, by a corresponding deduction in the demand for manufactures. From every part of Great Britain complaints have been received on the backward state of most of the crops. *The Economist* says on this subject :—

> In the South of England not only will there be left much land unsown, until too late for a crop of any sort, but much of the sown land will prove to be foul, ot otherwise in a bad state for corn-growing. On the wet or poor soils destined for wheat, signs that mischief is going on are apparent. The time for planting mangel-wurtzel may now be said to have passed away, and very little has been planted, while the time for preparing land for the turnip is rapidly going by, without any adequate preparation for this important crop having been accomplished . . . Oat sowing has been much interfered with by the snow and rain. Few oats were sown early, and late sown oats seldom produce a large crop . . . In many districts losses among the breeding flocks have been considerable.

The price of other farm-produce than corn is from 20 to 30, and even 50 per cent. higher than last year. On the Continent, corn has risen comparatively more than in England. Rye has risen in Belgium and Holland full 100 per cent. Wheat and other grains are following suit.

Under these circumstances, as the greater part of the regular commercial circle has already been run through by British trade, it may safely be augured that the Chinese revolution will throw the spark into the overloaded mine of the present industrial system and cause the explosion of the long prepared general crisis, which, spreading abroad will be closely followed by political revolutions on the Continent. It would be a curious spectacle, that of China sending disorder into the Western World while the Western powers, by English, French and American war steamers, are conveying "order" to Shanghai, Nankin, and the mouths of the Great Canal. Do these order-mongering powers, which would attempt to support the wavering Manchou dynasty, forget that the hatred against foreigners and their exclusion from the Empire, once the

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mere result of China's geographical and ethnographical situation, have become a political system only since the conquest of the country by the race of the Manchou Tartars ? There can be no doubt that the turbulent dissensions among the European nations who, at the later end of the seventeenth century, rivalled each other in the trade with China, lent a mighty aid to the exclusive policy adopted by the Manchous. But more than this was done by the fear of the new dynasty lest the foreigners might favour the discontent existing among a large proportion of the Chinese during the first half century or thereabouts of their subjection to the Tartars. From these considerations, foreigners were then prohibited from all communication with the Chinese except through Canton, a town at a great distance from Pekin, and the tea districts and their commerce restricted to intercourse with the Hong Kong merchants, licensed by the Government expressly for the foreign trade, in order to keep the rest of its subjects from all connection with the odious strangers. In any case an interference on the part of the Western Governments at this time can only serve to render the revolution more violent, and protract the stagnation of trade.

At the same time it is to be observed with regard to India, that the British Government of that country depends for full one-seventh of its revenue on the sale of opium to the Chinese, while a considerable proportion of the Indian demand for British manufactures depends on the production of that opium in India. The Chinese, it is true, are no more likely to renounce the use of opium than are the Germans to forswear tobacco. But as the new Emperor is understood to be favourable to the culture of the poppy and the preparation of opium in China itself, it is evident that a death blow is very likely to be struck at once at the business of opium-raising in India, the Indian revenue and the commercial resources of Hindostan. Though this blow would not immediately be felt by the interests concerned, it would operate effectually in due time and would come in to intensify and prolong the universal financial crisis whose horoscope we have cast above.

Since the commencement of the eighteenth century there has been no serious revolution in Europe which had not been preceded by a commercial and financial crisis. This applies no less to the revolution of 1789 than to that of 1848. It is true not only that we

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every day behold more threatening symptoms of conflict between the ruling powers and their subjects, between the State and society, between the various classes ; but also the conflict of the existing powers among each other gradually reaching that height where the sword must be drawn, and the *ultima ratio* of princes be recurred to. In the European capitals, every day brings despatches big with universal war, vanishing under the despatches of the following day, bearing the assurance of peace for a week or so. We may be sure, nevertheless, that to whatever height the conflict between the European powers may rise, however threatening the aspect of the diplomatic horizon may appear, whatever movements may be attempted by some enthusiastic fraction in this or that country, the rage of princes and the fury of the people are alike enervated by the breath of prosperity. Neither wars not revolutions are likely to put Europe by the ears, unless in consequence of a general commercial and industrial crisis, the signal of which has, as usual, to be given by England, the representative of European industry in the market of the world.

It is unnecessary to dwell on the political consequences such a crisis must produce in these times, with the unprecedented extension of factories in England, with the utter dissolution of her official parties, with the whole State Machinery of France transformed into one immense swindling and stock-jobbing concern, with Austria on the eve of bankruptcy, with wrongs everywhere accumulated to be revenged by the people, with the conflicting interests of the reactionary powers themselves, and with the Russian dream of conquest once more revealed to the world.

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THE INDUSTRIAL ALLIANCE

A Plea for Further Consolidation

By W. H. HUTCHINSON

(A.E.U. and Labour Party National Executive)

EVOLUTION, as every one knows, applies to Trade Unionism equally with industry, Government, and every other social institution. Social man, be he employer or employed, cannot escape from cosmic law. The history of British industry is a narrative of individualism extended, unfettered and unthinking. The mechanical inventions of the eighteenth century launched Britain, the precursor of power-driven industry, without one foreign rival. Every man possessed of the money, knowledge or acquisitiveness necessary became a Captain of Industry. He sweated his employees who were entirely at his mercy—for a space, as we know.

The point which interests us here, however, is the bearing which this absolute individualism had upon Labour in compelling a close relationship between the particular industry and the men who worked in it. A local character distinguished the early unionism, but the migratory habits induced by the rural exodus of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, to the towns which sprang up round the hastily devised factories, gradually induced a national type of organisation in labour unions. These, however, were purely of a craft, or occupational basis, which national organisation rendered—of necessity during that period—more solid and more rigid. Industry and Commerce continued on lines of utterly reckless individualism until the '60's, the Companies Act of 1862 giving the first legislative indication of a coming change. Trade Unionism, with its watchful eyes upon the employers, maintained its occupational formation in close correspondence with industry at each point.

Since the closing years of the nineteenth century, there have been many amalgamations and federations of separate unions functioning in certain industries. Some of these have been upon a

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grand scale, but the changes effected have never transgressed the original idea underlying the craft basis. There have been groupings of allied crafts, notably in the engineering industry. But although the activities of the miner, the steelworker and the railwayman are perhaps as vital to the fitter as are those of the moulder, the craft line has not as yet been crossed by Trade Unionism. Employers have emerged under stress of foreign competition from the hamper of antiquated ideas. Competition is relegated to the school copy-book, and exists as the text of last Sunday's sermon. Employers are practising the co-operation which they affect to condemn. The Federation of British Industries is the outward and visible sign of the battle formation of British capitalism, and against this power Trade Unionism puts forward the hastily-conceived, undeveloped device—it is little more—of the General Council. The one gratifying feature of the step represented in Trade Union Evolution is the awakening it betokens: Trade Unionism is realising its dangers. Craft unionism has given endless evidence of its unfitness to cope either in conflict or negotiation with the massed power of employers in an industry. Doubts, also, have shaken the craft mind concerning the immunity of its kingdom from invasion by the unskilled. The progress of invention renders this daily more insecure, and the interests, the work and wages of allied craftsmen, necessitate a widening of the union outlook. We must, in the evolutionary spirit, adapt ourselves to the changed environment *until we can control it.* The craft idea must accept certain modification.

The emergence of the T.U.C. General Council, from which so much was hoped, has been succeeded quite naturally by demands to invest it with additional powers, presumably of an executive character. It is, however, unfair—even impossible—to subject these demands to effective criticism: the demands are too vaguely stated for that, in fact they are nowhere definitely laid down in anything resembling detail.

The Council functions within limits on behalf of hundreds of unions affiliated to it separately. Without plenary powers, the Council cannot act in a crisis on behalf of these unions. It may not pledge them to any expenditure in a dispute; it is fettered in any comprehensive strike by the hesitancy and conservatism of isolated unions which are disinclined to join in any movement which does not

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affect their interests at the given moment. Obviously, some degree of consolidation of groups of unions is vitally necessary to any genuine functioning of the General Council. In effect, the Council is endeavouring to hold ground which it has not occupied. Employers have done better ; they perfected their Associations, gaining a wider view of their interests before risking failure in a grand effort. The F.B.I. is the culmination of a long evolutionary process which operated while Trade Unionism rested. Trade Unionism must search its mind. It must conquer its own ground. It must co-ordinate its units. When the General Council divided its affiliated organisations into groups of cognate occupations, what was the underlying idea ? Did the Council intend to consolidate each group into a massed industrial union ? That is what should have been proposed, but the absence of any step towards so obvious a consummation suggests either that the Council had no intention in that direction or was persuaded not to attempt it. In the present position of Trade Unionism, the extra powers needed by the Council cannot be obtained, and could not be used in the ultimate issue even if they were specifically conferred on that body. If, however, the necessary co-ordination of the craft units were achieved, the Council could function with efficiency and executive authority. For there is all the difference in the world between a Trade Union hierarchy operating on behalf of a proletariat, and a Council linked with the workers by an intelligent and loyal body of intermediate officers.

You cannot superimpose a structure like the General Council upon an organism like the Trade Union movement. Just as in the natural world function precedes structure, so in our Trade Union development the function which the movement must evolve must determine the character of the particular structure which will give the function fullest play.

This can only be secured by assimilation and co-ordination of kindred trades into a workable and efficient set of powerful groups which have effective control within their organisations. From these bodies the connective tissue will evolve quite naturally, and the structure of a General Staff and Council will reflect their ideas and purpose.

The Industrial Alliance of the " Big Five " is, perhaps, an ideal attempt to build an organisation of the larger Unions functioning on

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behalf of a given co-ordinated industry. Representation on the Council or the Alliance is assured to Executives of all Unions constituting the Alliance—in a delegate capacity, of course, not as "directors." This sort of Alliance is limited, possibly to key organisations, and unions of workmen related by occupation to them should, if perfect industrial action is desired, enter into alliance or amalgamation with their allied trades, and thus obtain representation through them on the Council. In this way Labour can be organised in Industrial Unions eligible for inclusion in the Alliance, and the effectiveness of Trade Unionism, not merely as a fighting force, but as a commercial asset, will be more nearly 100 per cent. than its present formation permits.

BOUND VOLUMES

for 1925

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THE COAL CRISIS AND THE WAY OUT

By A. J. COOK

(*National Secretary, Miners' Federation of Great Britain*)

A CRISIS of the greatest magnitude faces the British working-class movement. Capitalism in the mining industry has reached a stage at which the maintenance of the present basis has become impossible and drastic changes must take place if the industry is to continue to exist.

The mining industry is the key to the economic position of Great Britain. In the period of progressive development of British capitalism, the miners were in the vanguard of the working-class movement, building up a national industrial trade union organisation and leading the way in the struggle for better conditions and workers' control of industry. In the present period of capitalist decline the miners once again occupy the key position, but in a different way. They are now the most exposed to the capitalist attack, bearing the brunt of the attempt of capitalism to re-establish itself at the expense of the workers. The first attempt in this direction in 1921, ended victoriously for the employers, but it only staved off the crisis without providing any lasting solution for the problems facing the industry. The critical situation that has now arisen is a direct consequence of the flouting of the recommendations of the Sankey Commission. If the Sankey pledges had been honoured the coal industry would have been in a far sounder position altogether, it would have been in a position in a large measure to meet satisfactorily the difficulties of the present economic situation, and the crisis as it is now would never have come into existence.

The Sankey Commission recognised and stated in the clearest terms, that :—

> The present system of ownership and working in the coal industry stands condemned, and some other system must be substituted for it, either nationalisation or a method of unification by national purchase and/or by joint control.

The second report of the Sankey Commission was devoted to working out in detail how the substitution should be made. The

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report was ignored and the mine owners were permitted to carry on their short-sighted policy unchecked. The result is seen in the position of the industry to-day. No one can challenge the fact that private ownership has created chaos, conflict and confusion. While the miners' standard of living has been forced down below the pre-war level, all the tremendous economic waste of royalties, profit-making on inflated capital and uneconomical working and organisation have been retained.

At the present time wages are appallingly low. The average earnings per day worked vary from 8s. 5d. to 10s. 4d., for the most part the increase over the wages paid in July, 1914, lying between 50–60 per cent., although the official index of cost of living is 75 per cent. above pre-war. Even the mine owners in presenting their case quoted a figure of only 61 per cent. as the increase in miners' wages over the pre-war level, and their figure took no account of short time, and, therefore, is considerably in excess of the actual earnings. The average actual weekly earnings of the miner do not amount to more than 48s. 6d. per week. At this level, and there are many thousands of miners who are getting considerably less, the miners are receiving far less than any decent minimum of subsistence. Yet it is well-known that the industry has been a very profitable one in the past. The following table shows the aggregate profits made in the industry since the year 1913 :—

Year ended March 31 :	Aggregate Profits. £
1913	16,900,000
1914	21,100,000
1915	13,900,000
1916	26,200,000
1917	39,800,000
1918	26,300,000
1919	22,300,000
1920	41,800,000
1921	3,100,000
1922	(Loss) 1,800,000
1923	15,800,000
1924	28,800,000
1925	6,900,000

After 1917, when Government control was introduced, the profits from by-products are excluded. These profits are estimated to have been at least six million pounds sterling annually.

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In addition to the profits of the colliery owners, the industry has also provided enormous sums in royalties and wayleaves. The amounts paid to royalty owners in Great Britain average over £6,000,000 per annum. The following are examples of the sums drawn from the industry by certain members of our aristocracy :—

	Per annum £
Ecclesiastical Commissioners	370,000
Marquis of Bute (six years average). .	115,772
Duke of Hamilton (ten years average)	113,793
Lord Tredegar (six years average) . .	83,827
Duke of Northumberland (six years average)	82,450
Lord Dunraven (1918)	64,370
Earl Elsmere	43,497
Earl Durham	40,522

Notwithstanding that the industry is at present " on the dole " the royalty and wayleaves owners continue to draw these huge sums from the industry.

When the coal owners refer to the poor results of the industry in 1925 as regards dividend-paying capacity, they omit any consideration of the profits earned over a number of years. They say nothing of the extent of over-capitalisation by the issue of bonus shares or of the payment of royalties. More important still they say nothing of the profit of the coal industry as a whole, of which coal getting forms only one part, and a part which cannot rightly be considered in isolation. The official profit returns take no account of the other processes from which the owners derive substantial profits. The position is that the profits of coal getting may be deliberately kept at a low figure in order to enhance the profits of coal using concerns. As put by my colleague, Mr. S. O. Davies, before the Samuel Coal Commission :—

> The statement in our appendix proves that the persons who largely control the coal trade to-day are interested in a number of other industries that use or deal with a great deal of our coal output. Now, we have come to the conclusion that there is not the same concern to-day in the mining industry to secure profits as there was in the past. It does not matter to the people who are largely interested in coal to-day, whether they make their profits from their coal or from their by-products or from the other concerns in which they are interested, which use, consume or handle a great deal of coal.

Even granting, therefore, the general dislocation and depression

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of capitalist industry as a whole, there is no reason to believe that the coal industry is unable to pay a living wage to its workers. At present the industry is suffering more from the tremendous internal inefficiency, wasteful and unscientific method of working and costly and inefficient methods of distribution, than from the decline in the purchase of British coal by foreign users.

The whole world coal industry is suffering from the present crisis. The permanent causes of this crisis are to be found in the development of coal mining in countries like India, Canada, Australia and Africa, in the technical advances leading to economy in the use of coal and in the substitution of other forms of fuel (oil, hydro-electric power) for coal. But the real difficulty has arisen from the evil of private ownership in production. These difficulties have been augmented by the policy of successive capitalist Governments—and even of the Labour Government—by their insistence on Reparation in Coal, the Dawes Scheme, &c., which have done untold harm to the coal industry of every country.

Capitalism has no solution to offer but the maintenance of the present pitiful picture of social injustice, chaos and waste at the expense of the miners' standard of life. Despite the fact, now undisputed, that the miner is underpaid, underfed, and badly housed, the coal owners demand lower wages and longer hours.

The following table shows the average earnings per day which would be payable in the industry on the basis of the level of prices indicated by the owners and of present conditions of working, together with the resulting reduction from present earnings :—

District	Proposed Earnings	% Increase or Decrease over 1914	Reductions
	s. d.		s. d.
Scotland	6 4½	5*	4 0
Northumberland ..	6 4	2	2 10½
Durham	6 5	2	3 6½
South Wales ..	7 0	4	3 9
Eastern Division ..	7 5	11	3 6
Lancs. & Cheshire ..	5 11	1*	4 0½
North Wales ..	5 6	5*	3 7
Cumberland ..	5 8	8*	5 0
Forest of Dean ..	5 0	6*	3 11½
Somerset	6 .	27	2 4

* Decrease.

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It will be observed that the actual money amounts received by the miners, would in several districts be less than those received by them in 1914, notwithstanding that the value of money, as measured by the increase in cost of living, has depreciated enormously.

It is quite certain that with wages at this level, the industry would inevitably collapse, as the mine workers could not sustain the necessary physical energy to perform their work. Such however, are the mine owners' proposals.

The owners aver that such a position would be mitigated if the men consented to a return to the eight-hour day. In the present condition of the International Coal Market it is certain that such a change would not help the economic position. The miners are bitterly opposed to any suggestion of longer hours and would fight it to the utmost, on social grounds alone. It must be remembered that the present seven-hour day excludes one winding time. That means that the average time spent below ground is really 7 hours 37 minutes, while in many cases the men are now below ground more than eight hours. When it is realised that in many cases they have to journey long distances to and from the collieries, that each day they have to cleanse themselves in their own homes, and prepare for the following day, the bitter opposition to a longer working day will be appreciated.

Capitalism in each country has no way out. Everywhere it preaches the old formula : "Longer hours and Lower wages," utterly disregarding the known economic condition. In Great Britain it believes that the present moment is favourable to destroy Trade Unionism, hence its desire to first break up the Miners' Federation.

It is an ominous sign that the Conservative Government has utilised the period of truce since last August in perfecting machinery to meet an industrial upheaval. It is an ominous sign that it has appeared to give official encouragement to agencies for the destruction of both trade unions and political organisations.

As in 1921, the mine owners' attack is directed not merely against the miners alone, but against the whole working class. Indeed, it will be remembered that at the Coal Commission the owners actually proposed that a reduction in railway and dock charges should be obtained through drastic reductions in the wages

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of railwaymen and dock workers. The mine owners' blunt demand for the practical destruction of the National Miners' Federation, for lower wages and longer hours, is the same demand, only put in the crudest and cruellest terms, that capitalism is making to the workers of every industry. The only difference is that in the mining industry the situation is such that the direct issue of the continuance of capitalism has immediately to be faced. The mining industry has become the cock-pit of the first great conflict between labour and capital in this country. It is no longer a question of worse or slightly better conditions, it is a question of the fate of the industry itself. There is no alternative to ruin both for the workers and for the industry but the removal of the stranglehold of parasitism that is squeezing the life out of both.

The miners do not want a strike or a lock-out. They want peace and a settlement which will prevent the recurrence of such attacks as the present. They are preparing to defend their already low standard of living. They have not even put in an application for an increase of wages, though heaven knows they would be justified in doing so. In defending their standards and their national organisation they are confident of the support, not only of the whole British working class, but of the workers of the world.

A united defence of the workers to the challenge of capitalism must and will be given. But for a solution of the problems of the industry a bold plan is needed and not mere tinkering. Such a plan has been put forward by the miners, and, indeed, it has been widely remarked that the sole constructive proposals for the restoration of the industry have come from the miners. The mine owners have nothing to put forward except the demand for starvation conditions. It is not by these means that the coal industry, which is still the basis for British industry as a whole, can be placed on a secure foundation. For this, only the abolition of private ownership will suffice.

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WHERE IS MR. BALDWIN GOING ?

By "OUTPOST"

IN a little spate of speeches, Cabinet Ministers performed an overture to the new session of Parliament. The theme of their piece was the sweet old melody, Optimism and Economy. Mr. Winston Churchill, always a good exponent of whatever line of argument happens to be opportune, was prominent among the performers.

At Leeds, on January 21, he announced that he perceived "an undoubted, though slow and slight, improvement in the industrial and commercial outlook."

> "The world," he said, "is now peaceful ; the harvests have been good ; from many quarters come the reports that trade is on the mend. We know that unemployment has been sensibly reduced, and, apart from coal, substantially reduced, and reduced in spite of a continually increasing population of wage-earners. None of these conditions was present in August. There was nothing but gloom then, and now there is modest hope . . . Hope for all . . . Hope for the manufacturer . . . . Hope for the merchant . . . Hope for the artisan . . . Hope for those who are out of employment . . . Prosperity . . . is on our threshold."

Again, the next day, at Bolton, Mr. Churchill claimed a "sensible improvement of the Government in the last six months," and mentioned the triumphs of Locarno, the Irish boundary settlement, widows' and orphans' pensions, housing and (a little more positive in his note to-day, like the thrush whose song strengthens from hour to hour in the early spring) "better trade." The Government, he said, was following a "national policy," whereas both Liberal and Labour parties were split from end to end by deep rifts.

And what was needed to make the picture even brighter in the future ? Economy. We must, said Mr. Churchill, have economy all round.

A lesser songster, but a no less fervent, is Mr. Amery. At Glasgow, on the same day on which Mr. Churchill was singing the

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Government's praises at Bolton, Mr. Amery was saying that "no greater volume of solid constructive work for peace at home or abroad was ever achieved by any Cabinet in the time available" as by the Baldwin Government in its period of office.

Mr. Baldwin himself told a London Conservative audience that :—

> Our political credit and our financial credit abroad have been raised to a higher level than they have held since the war . . . our year's work will stand comparison with that of any previous Government in the same length of time.

But now, economy was necessary, in local government no less than nationally and imperially.

These will do as examples of the way in which the Optimism and Economy theme is given out. Let us now ask the question—To what purpose ? The prospect of a coal crisis in May remains the dominant fact in current domestic politics. The presence of that menacing fact makes an answer easy, as far as the present moment is concerned. If we can espy, says Mr. Baldwin, in effect, the rosy dawn of trade revival, shall we blot it out by creating industrial clouds, or shall we prepare for it under the clear sky of good fellowship ?

The effort to create belief in the coming trade revival (an illusion, in sober fact) is directed in the first place to weakening the workers' forces, in preparation for the May crisis, and to rendering impossible the recruiting of the Labour front, as in last July. Mr. Baldwin knows well enough how susceptible are Labour leaders to the argument that we should not foul our good British nest by internal strife at the moment when, by co-operation, we may make it snug and warm under the sun of better trade. That is why, simultaneously with the full blast of the Optimism and Economy overture, minor strains were heard (Lord Londonderry's, for instance) suggesting that workers and employers should again get together, and find "a way out." Minor strains, perhaps, and apparently unlikely to produce their full effect, but they serve what is, after all, their main purpose, of distracting the attention of a proportion of the Labour leaders from their task of preparing a united working class front. That is all Mr. Baldwin need aim at for the moment. It will, of course, be better from his point of view if the miners do not fight at all in May—that is, if the optimism

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strain were to enchant them completely. It will be next best if they fight alone—that is, if the magic music overcomes the rest of the Labour ranks. In either case, he can then reckon pretty confidently on a victory for the capitalists, a delaying of the really big social issue—and the remark, "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," has become very distinctly in these days a slogan for the capitalist class.

Nevertheless, the optimism theme has more far-reaching uses. Other voices are taking it up, producing variations on it more or less in harmony with Mr. Baldwin and Lord Londonderry, and completely in unison with them in the object of distracting and dividing the leaders of the working class. One of these voices is worth reproducing. It provides points to which we shall have to return later. It is that of the *Observer*, which says :—

> The old lazy and unintelligent way of looking first to lower wage rates for economy is passing . . . This change had to begin on the side of capital. But capital by itself cannot complete it. It waits the response from Labour. We think the response will come.

The *Observer* goes on to commend the enterprise of the *Daily Mail*, which is organising an excursion of trade unionists to the United States, so that they may see how, in God's own country, production unhampered by trade union restrictions has led to high wages and prosperity all round. That way, thinks the *Observer*, will come Labour's response to the call for economy—by a revival of the "produce more" campaign.

But we have yet to complete the chorus of voices. Taking up again the economy theme, it is instructive to take the views of others than Cabinet Ministers. While Mr. Churchill was pluming himself on the Cabinet's record, certain capitalists were expressing discontent. Thus Sir Christopher Needham, chairman of the District Bank (Manchester) expressed regret that Mr. Churchill had increased his estimates, and dwelt particularly on the "burden of local rates." The rates on a typical cotton-weaving shed in 1914 were, he said, £184, and in 1924, with the same looms and machinery, they were £599. It is significant that local government expenditure was the feature attacked by several other capitalists at this same moment, when Mr. Churchill was boasting himself.

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The Times quoted with approval and emphasis the remarks of Mr. Machin, the President of the Association of British Chambers of Commerce, who reminded his audience of a deputation of business men who had gone to the Chancellor of the Exechequer to tell him that in the present circumstances an £800,000,000 a year budget was too much. And particularly regarding local government, Mr. Machin denounced the "mounting up" of expenditure, and declared there was "no more important duty that any man can undertake than that of devoting part of his time to the municipal affairs of his own locality." Reference to Mr. Baldwin's speech, quoted above, will show that he also mentioned local government as a suitable field for economy.

We have now given a pretty representative reproduction of the minor voices, dwelling on the theme of the Government's policy, as well as of those of Ministers themselves. On the whole, it can be said that optimism is the predominant ministerial note, and economy is most loudly sounded by the Government's critical friends. It is then duly, and naturally, of course, taken up by the Ministers themselves. And now, as we inquired into the immediate purpose of the optimism note, we may turn to the more complicated question of the purpose of economy.

The two notes are equally necessary to the harmony of the theme. Optimism dazzles the workers, creates conflicting impulses among them, weakens their resolution to form a united working-class front. That is to say, it prepares them to go down before a capitalist attack. Economy is the guise in which the attack is delivered. Economy in local, national and imperial affairs, says Mr. Baldwin, dutifully noting his masters' nod, and for the coming session there are put down Bills to extend the Local Authorities Emergency Provisions Act, to amend the Unemployment Insurance Acts, and "to reduce expenditure in connection with certain services and to effect economies." The professed object of all these measures is economy, and in addition, as is well known, the administration under existing Acts of education, public health, unemployment relief, has been pinched to the point of cruelty. The burden of all these economies falls upon the workers, employed and unemployed, and their wives and children. This Mr. Baldwin does in obedience to his masters' nod—but why do his masters nod? That question

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brings us to some fundamental considerations of Mr. Baldwin's policy.

A year ago we were being promised trade revival as the result of the return to the gold standard. The return to the gold standard was made, but has the result been achieved? Mr. Churchill now offers "hope, modest hope" of the trade revival. In effect the figures for the past year offer nothing but ground for the most modest of hopes. Mr. Churchill's own colleague, Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister, President of the Board of Trade, had to admit this in the course of an argument in which he complained that it was "dangerous, misleading and fantastic to suggest that this country was living on its capital. There was a trade balance in its favour . . ." He went on to admit that, in visible trade, the balance was adverse. But to get the real position there must be an accurate estimate of invisible exports. Taking a strictly conservative estimate of invisible exports, the result was that last year we had a trade balance of not less than 28 or 30 millions. (The Board of Trade itself computes our favourable trade balance, secured on the basis of invisible exports, as £28,000,000 in 1925, £63,000,000 in 1924, and £153,000,000 in 1923—a very steep decline.) No wonder, in view of these figures, that Sir Philip concluded by saying that the balance to-day was insufficient. It was not nearly so much as before the war, and to-day the country needed a bigger balance for the purpose of providing new capital for the development of new markets.

This is where we get near to the root of this economy business. We have returned to the gold standard—and our trade balance is insufficient. What is the meaning of those two facts? The return to the gold standard was a stroke of the pen by which it became possible to release the masses of bullion—more than half of the world's supply—which had been locked up—"sterlised"—in the vaults of the United States banks, and to return this gold to Europe in the form of loans. The Dawes agreement was the beginning of this process. The British return to the gold standard carried it further—the re-conversion of "sterlised" gold into active American loan-capital, poured into Europe, and demanding interest for American financiers.

There's the rub. When our bankers glowed with pride because the pound looked the dollar in the face they did not explain that it

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could only do so by dint of enormous payments of interest on loans. They did not explain that the obscure technical phrases in which they expressed their satisfaction would mean, if translated into English which the workers would understand, " Now, you devils, sweat your guts out, and pay that interest somehow."

But that is what it did mean. The flow of gold from the United States to Europe has only increased the indebtedness of European capitalists to American. That is, it has only piled up on the shoulders of the workers an increased burden of interest-payments on war-debt and every kind of capital holding. It has added those increased burdens to the already staggering loads of payments for militarism and imperialism, for our own three hundred odd millions a year of interest on national debt, &c. And we have a shrinking trade balance, secured by invisible exports, and computed last year at only £28,000,000.

Now we can see clearly the reason for the economy propaganda, and for Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister's plaint. The burden of interest-payments to America, of footing the bills for militarism, imperialism, and our own national debt, rests upon the shoulders of the workers, but how can they pay? The commodities which the workers produce must be sold before the payments can be made. That is how the desired " bigger balance " is to be achieved. But to sell, British capitalists must compete with the freer, wealthier system of production of the United States itself. They must produce commodities in the markets of the world at prices lower than those of their chief creditor. It is their last chance of struggling for independence, for dominance, against the power of America. That is the root reason for the " economy all round " cry. For the workers it is obvious that economy is limited to a few too-familiar forms : longer working hours ; lower wages ; more production. Both pre-requisite and corollary to these is the destruction of the power of the trade unions. We have seen already that the " produce more " campaign is being revived, and a select party of trade unionists is being sent to the United States to see how high productivity and high wages go hand in hand. The next step will be an open shop campaign in Britain. Here again the optimism note plays its part, by dissuading sections of the workers from " killing," by united front tactics, our " hopes " of reviving trade.

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To maintain the gold standard, then, means intensified competition, and that means lower standard wages for the workers. But let us go a step further. In their efforts to get the necessary surplus, to pay America its interest, our capitalists must look for new markets. But they find the markets of the world shrinking. Europe still starved, its greatest workshop turned into a coolie plantation by the Dawes plan, Russia still cut off by the bankers' boycott, China's capacity for absorbing manufactures crippled by the very policy of the imperialists themselves, competitive industry springing up in the Dominions, all combined make the possibilities of selling manufactures less and less. Also, to get into the existing markets, we must undersell our competitors. Germany is forced by the Dawes Plan to export cheaply, in order to pay vast sums in interest and reparations; the depreciated franc and an enormous new industrial development enable France to sell cheaply: America pours forth goods—and *we*; if we are to maintain the gold standard, if the pound is to continue looking the dollar in the face, *we* must undersell them all. Again, there is no means of underselling save by cutting the standards of British workers—that is, by "economy all round."

The worker may be pardoned for failing to see how his standards can possibly be reduced any lower. But supposing it were possible, supposing that, inversely to the depression of his standards, the virtue of "economy all round" were to rise to unprecedented achievements, and trade revival and more production as in America were to follow, a new question arises for the worker. Will it mean easier times for him, or yet lower standards, less freedom? An examination of the more permanent tendencies of the capitalist class suggests an answer here. We have referred to the talk of trade revival as dazzle for the labour leaders, as an inducement for them to stave off strikes. The "getting together" talk, we have said, gives the capitalists breathing space by disuniting the labour front. But the "getting together" talk is more than a casual bait. It is a definite piece of capitalist class equipment, it is camouflage which hides the preparation for the coming attack. It is a particularly valuable piece of camouflage, because it gives the impression that the capitalists are disunited, that there are well-meaning ones who want "peace," and there are brutal ones who want to force an attack

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on the workers. And thus it hides the fact that the attack is coming anyway, that behind this illusory screen blow after blow is preparing for the workers, each one to be driven home by the inevitable development of the capitalist world situation. A new coal truce may be patched up in May, but that in itself will only be the preparation for a yet heavier blow upon the workers. The situation demands these blows, as the inevitable acts of a class which is fighting for its power and existence in the future, and is steadily becoming conscious of its position, despite the lingering dreams of the "men of good will."

That, then, is one of the permanent tendencies of the capitalist class—the increasingly fierce attack on the workers as the world capitalist struggle grows fiercer. From that it follows that no economy and increased production campaigns can make the lot of the workers easier.

Another permanent tendency of the capitalist class is its growing conservatism. Mr. Lloyd George's millionaire colleague, Sir Alfred Mond, feels that the present is a time for the sternest resistance to all "socialistic" tendencies. That is, Sir Alfred feels the steady pull of conservatism, of the power of those who hold the wealth and are feeling the growing intensity of the struggle to maintain it, and whose struggles even for expansion are only struggles to remain in existence, because, in fact, they are on the down grade. Despite the chorus of optimism, despite all talk of the trade balances that can be built up, of the new markets that can be captured if only economy be practised, our financier-capitalist class knows well enough its economic vassalage. It knows, too, of the challenge of the growing revolutionary working class. Hence its own growing conservatism which is only the last desperate clutch at a means to maintain power. If the British capitalists were Marxist in outlook, they would know that the forces against them, first of the superior American capitalist class, and after that of the revolutionary working class, were overwhelming. But, as Trotsky remarks, they lack confidence in to-morrow, therefore, they do not peer too far ahead—only far enough to get the illusion of a dawn of better trade. This second permanent tendency then, that of conservatism, also robs the workers of any hope, even under better trade, of better standards. Everything must be subjected to the

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effort to maintain the position of British capitalism in competition with American. That is, everything must be sacrificed to the maintenance of the gold standard. And that again means that the British workers must sweat, must bear the burden of economy, to pay tribute to the new Cæsar of Wall Street. But, as the figures show, our trade is on the down-grade all the time. Therefore, economy or no economy, more production or no more production, the standard of the British workers *cannot*, in the long run, rise. Only the beginning by the working class of the revolutionary struggle to replace the system of private ownership and vested interests by working class rule can offer the certainty of better conditions.

The effort to preserve the present system means one other thing. Competition, underselling, more production, economy, none of these can stop the decline of British capitalism bound by its golden chains of loans to the United States. None of these can free British capitalists of their vassalage to America. But, before the Imperial machine collapses, our capitalists will surely try conclusions with America by armed force. Nothing can be more certain then that the struggle against economic vassalage, for markets by the process of underselling, leads to war. That is where Mr. Baldwin, with his gold standard, his optimism and economy, is ultimately going.

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COLOUR *v.* CLASS IN SOUTH AFRICA

By M. G. DESAI

TO-DAY, South Africa is perhaps the biggest menace to the growing unity of the world's workers. For representing, as it does, the meeting ground of races from all parts of the world, it is just here that racial divisions among the workers are most pronounced. With incredible short-sightedness the White workers of the Union are joining hands with the capitalists to beat back the Africans and Asiatics into a state of semi-slavery. In face of the monumental selfishness on the part of the White workers in South Africa itself, the long distance fraternal greetings of the European trade unionists are apt to sound as hypocritical to the dusky masses of the East as the sentimental cant of the missionaries with which they have been so long familiar.

It is significant that South Africa should be taking a lead in forcing the coloured races into economic serfdom and political helotry. Throughout the last century and more, she has been perfecting the science of turning men into robots. As late as 1834, the Boer farmers were battening on the labour of the negroes and the Malayas bought from the English slave-dealers.

With the abolition of slavery, rapid progress in farming and industry met with a difficulty. The Bantu and Hottentot tribes, secure on their communal lands in the hinterland, could not be easily induced to work for others and the White workers would not remain long in service in view of the easy accessibility of land. It was, therefore, thought necessary to introduce labour that would have nothing to fall back upon. Special recruiting agencies were established to enlist negroes from Central Africa, and with the help of the obliging Indian Government, poor ignorant agricultural workers from India were trapped into indentured labour—periodic slavery. Besides this outside labour the South African natives were also gradually squeezed out of their ever narrowing reservations and forced to migrate to the mines and the towns to sell their labour to the Whites. The comparatively more skilled Indian

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workers were employed in the development of the tea, tobacco, and sugar industry, and in railway construction ; while the Africans were harnessed to the more strenuous work in the coal, gold, and diamond mines.

The Indians were brought out on the clearest understanding that when they had served their five years' indenture, they would be treated as free men ; and if they preferred to relinquish their right to the free return passage, they would be given land of a corresponding value. But the colonists soon began to feel that a free Indian was not as desirable as an Indian coolie. So the Municipalities started placing restrictions on their trading activities ; and a heavy tax was imposed on all free Indians who would not re-indenture themselves. In the mining areas, the African workers were faring much worse. They were doing the deeper underground work for ridiculously low wages. And, even when off duty, they were not free, but were locked up like pigs into terribly insanitary compounds. The rate of mortality has been fearfully high, especially from phthisis and pneumonia. During the Boer war, these carefully built-up colonies of semi-slaves were scattered. Hence in 1904-5, some 50,000 indentured Chinese workers were introduced on the Rand. But after having exploited them for some six years, all of them were repatriated in 1910. The Indian experience had taught the colonists not to take any risks.

The policy of the employers has been to play one section of workers against another—the skilled half-castes against the whites ; the semi-skilled Indians and Africans against the half-castes and the "Poor Whites" ; and African workers from outside the Union against the natives. The White workers, if they had been wise, would have retaliated by taking a lead in organising all-inclusive Unions. But in the colonies, race hatred has been sublimated under high auspices into a Christian cult. And the White workers have followed an opportunist selfish policy with disastrous results even to themselves. It will be remembered how in 1922 the White workers on the Gold Reef struck as a protest against the admission of natives to semi-skilled work and the consequent reduction of the wages of the Whites. It soon developed into a general strike so far as the White workers were concerned. There were frequent collisions between the strikers and the police and

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military leading to violence. But while these stirring things were happening, the vast masses of native workers were compelled to remain idle spectators. In the end martial law was declared, the strikers suppressed with bloodshed and the Whites had to resume work on the employers' terms, as far as work was available, and the recognition of their Federation was withdrawn.

South African industries are organised on a basis of an excessively large amount of cheap unskilled labour in relation to the skilled workers. There are in general eight natives to one European. In all the mines, for instance, there were 31,000 Europeans to 272,000 native workers in 1924. The White miner on the average gets £335 annually, while the native gets £27. So far as skilled work is concerned there is as yet no serious competition between the White and the coloured. The real competition is for semi-skilled work, and that, too, generally with the "Poor White" Boers, who have been flocking to the industrial areas from agricultural parts. With the introduction of railways, the Boer farmers, with their primitive methods of agriculture based on cheap land and cheap labour, had to face the fierce competition of the world market; and a process of elimination of inefficients set in. It is from the ranks of the latter that the Poor Whites of the city slums are recruited. In 1921, they numbered 120,000. It is largely for their benefit that the new legislation is being enacted.

By the Class Areas Bill and the Colour Bar Bill, and other kindred legislation, what is proposed in effect is a thorough-going segregation of all Asiatics[1] and Africans[2] in the Union—territorially, industrially, and politically. In rural areas, they will be crammed into certain narrow reservations. In the cities, the necessary number of workers will have to reside in well-defined slums. It will not be open to them to learn or engage in any skilled or semi-skilled work. No Indian or African can be so much as a lift-boy or chauffeur. If they would have to bore a well or run a tractor on their land, they will have to engage a White. They cannot aspire to any political rights. They are graciously allowed the privilege of electing a small number of Whites to represent them in the Union Parliament. The worst conditions in the worst parts of the Union at present in existence would thus be standardised throughout the

[1] 165,731 [2] 4,697,913

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Union. Especially in the Cape Province, for instance, the coloured races had so far practically been on a footing of equality with Whites; but all that is to go. In view of the existing pressure on land in Native reservations and consequent drift to towns and in view of the congested condition of the 30 miles coastal belt in Natal to which Indians are to be confined, these restrictive proposals are evidently in effect a device to swell the ranks of the landless proletariat, and to further beat down the already low wages of the unskilled coloured workers.

The half-castes are exempted but the Asiatics, mainly Indians, are deliberately classed with the natives. The reasons for this special animus against Indians, who number at present 160,000, are obvious. Firstly, they fraternize with the natives. Secondly, their ranks have also been strengthened by the prosperous Indian merchants who followed in the wake of the Indian workers. The Whites object to the competition of this Indian trading class, who are moreover sufficiently influential to secure wide-spread attention to their grievances in India and elsewhere. After Gandhi's passive resistance campaign a compromise was patched up in 1913, and repeatedly confirmed at Imperial Conferences, providing that the lot of the already domiciled Indians should at least be improved, in return for which South Africa should be allowed to close its doors against further entry of free Indians. But as soon as the war was over, things have again been made too hot for Indians, and already 35,000 Indians have been turned out of S. Africa and dumped into India. This is not re-patriation but depatriation, because 70 per cent. of the South African Indians were born and brought up in the colony.

Among the Natives, the old tribal traditions of implicit obedience to the headman—in pay of the Government—are fast breaking down ; and there is a rapid approximation to modern standards. Primary education is becoming general. In 1907, they started a college for higher education. The workers in the industrial areas are becoming class-conscious. Witness, for instance, the splendid strike of 71,000 native workers employed on the Rand in 1920. They have organised themselves politically and industrially into the S.A. Native National Congress and the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union. The trouble at

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Bloemfontein last April leading to shooting and the boycott of the Prince's visit are evidences of their rising temper. At their last congress they have resolved to embark upon a passive resistance campaign if the proposed legislation be passed.

The following extract from the secretary's report to the Fifth Congress of the Native Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union is significant of the new spirit among the African workers.

> We are aiming at the building up in Africa of a National Labour Organisation of the aboriginals, through which we shall break the wall of White autocracy and Capitalism. We shall not rest there. We shall open the gates of the Houses of Legislature now under the control of the White Oligarchy and from their steps we shall claim equality of purpose with the workers of the world to overthrow Capitalism and usher in a Co-operative Commonwealth—a system of government which is not foreign to the aboriginals of Africa.

What is the motive behind the White policy of enforcing racial subjection? That policy is, of course, intended to ensure the supremacy as an exploiting race of the tiny minority, one and a-half millions in all, of the White community. The ostensible justification for it, however, that is put forward is the necessity for preventing the racial purity of this minority from being submerged.

This racial bogey must be squarely faced by the workers if international unity is to be more than a dream. For the racial problem of South Africa is only an epitome of the whole racial problem throughout the world. Everywhere European Imperialism has not only transferred large sections of the European population to other continents, but also scattered vast masses of other races, helter-skelter, over the globe.

In the South African Union as elsewhere, permutations and combinations—between the Dutch, the British, the Jews, the "Poor Whites," the Hottentots, the Kaffirs, the Negroes, the Indians, the Malayans, the Arabs, the Chinese—have been in continuous development behind the transparent curtains of bourgeois respectability and racial purity. The number of half-castes is three to four times the entire Asiatic population.

Race fusion leads to decadence, say the purists and pseudo-scientists, and point to the position of half-castes the world over. Disowned by Westerners and despised by Orientals, it is true that the half-caste has on the whole been in unenviable plight. But

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there is not a shred of evidence to prove that there is anything biologically wrong with him. It is the social forces that have been against him. In any case, any attempt at this hour to preserve the phantom of race purity by the erection of an intricate caste system will prove as futile and suicidal as the caste system in India. With the assertion of economic and political freedom by the coloured races, and the emancipation of women, there is likely to be a still greater admixture of races.

It is not whiteness, but civilisation that should be the goal of South Africa and similar countries. If the White colonists care only for their racial purity, let them remove themselves from countries where they are not the rightful inhabitants. But if, in order ostensibly to preserve their racial purity but really to maintain the race dominance of one-sixth of the population, they persist in the policy of attempting to separate and lock up the overwhelming majority of the people like cattle in the kraals, then let them beware for they are building their whited sepulchres on the slopes of a rumbling volcano.

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A SOVIET PRISON

By WALTER M. CITRINE

(Acting Secretary, T.U.C. General Council)

IN no country in the world are greater social and economic experiments being tested than in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. A few months ago it was my privilege, in conjunction with my colleague, Mr. George Hicks, General Secretary of the Amalgamated Union of Building Trades Workers, to visit Moscow and see for ourselves some of the methods by which the social problems of the new Republic are being tackled.

It is not my purpose in this article to attempt to give an analysis of the system by which it is sought to reduce, and possibly to eliminate, crime, but rather to describe in a somewhat colloquial fashion the incidents we encountered. It may be that by such a method the reader will himself be better able to draw conclusions than by any attempt at a reasoned analysis on my part.

Our visit to the Sokolniki Prison followed immediately after the inspection of the District Militia (or Police) system in Moscow, which we had been examining on the morning of October 15.

In conformity with our general plan we made up our minds that we would disclose our intentions as to where we should go at very short notice. We did this deliberately to avoid being shown only what the authorities might have desired us to see.

The Sokolniki Prison

Having settled that we should visit the Sokolniki Prison, we proceeded at once by motor car some twenty minutes' journey until we arrived at the outer gates of the prison. This prison consists of two portions, one a very old place, and the other a four-storey building which was erected just prior to the war. We passed an armed sentry at the gateway, and after disclosing our identity we were shown up into the room of the Commandant.

He explained that before going round the prison it would be well that we should be familiar with the broad outlines of the system. They did not call these establishments prisons, but

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Educational Institutions for criminals. The utmost length of detention to which any person is confined in this establishment is ten years. The minimum term of detention at this establishment is six months.

I asked the Commandant as to what form of criminals they had in detention, and he stated they were principally there for general crime, but a few were in for counter-revolution. Generally the prisoners did not serve more than half of the term to which they were sentenced. There is a Guardian Committee which watches the effect of their detention upon the prisoners and carefully marks their progress. If the prisoner shows aptitude and a real desire to reform, his sentence is reduced materially. Every prisoner is given the opportunity of working at some useful trade and every two days which they work is counted as three days' imprisonment. The effect of this, therefore, is to reduce very materially the length of detention of those who undertake to work. The acceptance of work is not compulsory, but it has such advantages that there are very few prisoners who do not avail themselves of this opportunity.

They are paid the full trade union rates of wages, but one half of this is retained by the authorities until the end of the detention period, when the prisoner receives the balance in a lump sum, which should be sufficient to give him a decent restart in life. They work in three shifts of eight hours usually, but not every workshop is necessarily working the full three shifts.

An account is opened for the prisoner at a Co-operative Stores which is part of the prison establishment and where the prisoner may obtain all sorts of little luxuries if he so desires. He has to pay for these at a rate slightly more favourable to him than the general level of prices throughout Moscow.

If the prisoner is a family man with dependants he can allot half his wages for the maintenance of his family. I saw no women in this establishment.

A Tour of the Workshops

After this general explanation, we proceeded on a tour round the workshops. The first place we came to was the smithy, where we saw working a number of men, none of whom were in any special uniform. I remarked about this and was assured that it is

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not the practice for a prisoner to wear anything other than his ordinary clothing. I asked as to whether we might speak to any of them and question them, and was freely given permission.

We then travelled along until we came to the woodworking shop, where I was amazed to find that with all sorts of inflammable material lying about, the men were smoking to their hearts' content. Among the men in this shop I could discern nothing that suggested the criminal type. I was informed that most of them had sentences varying from two to five years.

We then went into the metal shop where amongst other things they were making bedsteads. There were drilling machines, lathes, punching machines and all of the usual mechanical equipment that one would find in an engineering shop. The men were all working very assiduously, and I was informed that they were all on piece-work and did not require much overseeing.

Most of the prisoners were good humoured looking fellows, and they smiled rather quizzically as we approached them. Almost hidden away behind a drilling machine I saw a boy who did not appear to be more than about seventeen years old. I confess that I was somewhat horrified to find one so young in such a place. I remarked about this to the Commandant, who called the young fellow forward. He did not seem too well pleased at being disturbed from his work and came forward in a half aggressive mood. I said to our interpreter : " I do not like this idea of questioning these men before everybody. We have got to have some regard for their feelings." " Oh, they do not mind," he retorted. Still I was not satisfied, and when the matter was explained to the Commandant, he evidenced a ready desire to leave us in privacy.

I said, " How old are you ? " The answer surprised me.

" I am twenty-three."

I said, " What have you been sentenced for ? "

" Stealing."

" How long have you got ? "

" Three years."

" Is this the first time you have been in prison ? "

" No, I have been in three times before."

This somewhat staggered me and I secretly resolved not to rely too much on outward appearances.

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Next we proceeded to where the prisoners were making photograph frames, then to the cardboard box making where we met a rather interesting old gentleman. My attention was attracted to him by the remark from Hicks, " He looks a regular old Tsarist." I turned and looked at the old fellow who had a long white drooping moustache, was very sharp featured and was smoking a cigarette in an elegant holder. He calmly went on with his work while we were watching him, and seemed perfectly at ease and quite unafraid. After a number of questions had been put, it transpired that he was an ex-colonel of the Tsar's army, and had been sentenced to five years for counter-revolution. He had been thirty-five years in the army, and was now sixty-three years old. I could see that the Commandant was looking suspiciously at him on hearing his replies to the questions, and the Commandant said something to our interpreter in Russian, who became visibly excited. " Ah," he broke out, " this man was Chief of the Omsk Department of Secret Police. You may depend upon it that he has been responsible for the loss of the lives of many of my comrades. He is lucky to be alive."

The old man, who evidently knew that his reputation was known, looked down with complete indifference on the cardboard boxes whose tops and sides he was glueing together as though it was a matter of no interest what any Bolshevik thought about him.

" How long have you been in prison ? " I queried.

" Thirty-three months."

I looked round and observed that the Commandant had walked out of the room.

I said, " How are you treated ? "

" Oh, very good," he returned nonchalantly.

One of his fellow prisoners, who was standing on the opposite side of the table working away, looked up, and in what appeared to me to be a rather embittered tone said in pretty good English : " He is treated very humanely."

The Dormitories

After this I said that I would like to see the cells where the prisoners slept.

" But there are no cells," replied the Commandant. " We have no such system here. The men sleep in dormitories. We do not

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believe in confining them by themselves." So we passed into the newer building and found ourselves in a long corridor about a dozen feet wide running down one side of which were a number of stout oak doors with a small square of glass in each. These were the dormitories. Up and down the corridor was passing an armed guard.

"Which would you like to go into first?" I was asked, and after a second's consultation with Hicks we decided upon one at the far end. The heavily padlocked door was quickly opened and we found ourselves in a room which had in it about twenty beds.

About half the beds were occupied, the remaining men being on their shift, while those we saw were having their time off. Some prisoners were sitting down reading, others were smoking and chatting together. One fellow had been tinkling away on a mandoline, which he stopped when we came in. They did not seem to bother about us very much, although one or two of them rose to their feet when they saw us.

A few towels were hanging up over the beds, while one chap had a good attaché case lying upon a shelf above him. On a table near the window (which incidentally was heavily barred) I saw a bunch of flowers. The dormitory was perfectly clean, although like most rooms in Russia not much fresh air was circulated, the windows all being closed.

We went into the other rooms and found much the same thing as I have described. On the floor above, and again selecting which dormitory we desired to enter, we found a man seated on the bed in a rich fur coat, although it was summer time. He was sewing some of his garments, and after a glance at us he resumed his work without concern. I asked him as to whether he had found any bugs in the prison, and he shook his head vigorously. I thought this question somewhat superfluous because it was quite evident that a high degree of cleanliness was observed everywhere.

Library and Co-operative Stores

We went down next to the library, where they had a good stock of books. The librarian, who was himself a prisoner, said that they had 600 prisoners in the institution and had changes of books for sixty or seventy people per day, which he thought very creditable.

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Half the library consists of fiction and the majority of the remaining books deal with social subjects. The most widely read books are those of O. Henry and Jack London.

We then went down to the Co-operative Stores, where we saw a plentiful supply of bread, butter, tobacco, cheese, and a host of other commodities on sale.

There were two men in this place standing behind a low counter. One of them was doing some bookkeeping in the corner, and I was surprised to find that both of these men were prisoners also.

The Commandant shook his head when questioned about the bookkeeper. He said it was a very unfortunate case as this man had been a commissioner of a brigade in the " Red " Army and had occupied the rank of General. He had, however, embezzled some of the funds under his charge, and had been sentenced to ten years imprisonment. I said that it was a severe sentence, but the Commandant assured me that a betrayal of trust of that description was one of the most serious crimes which could be committed.

The other man was checking a list of the commodities on the shelves, and on inquiring into the system, I was informed that the prisoners received goods on credit, and that these are checked against their earnings.

I thought it rather risky to leave prisoners in charge of stock, but the Commandant said it was not more risky than it was for capitalists to leave hungry workers in charge of stocks that they can dispose of. At all events they had not found any disadvantage from the present method.

Just as we were about to leave I noticed this second man feeling in his waistcoat pocket. Finally he unearthed a cigarette, and after tapping it for a moment on the rack before him as smokers do, he felt for a match. Discovering he had not got one, he walked over to the Commandant with the cigarette in his left hand. The Commandant, who was smoking, in the most matter-of-fact way in the world held his lighted cigarette in order that the prisoner could get a light.

Hicks and I looked at one another, and it was as much as we could do to prevent ourselves from laughing outright.

" What sort of a place is this we have come to ? " I said. " Is it a prison or a pantomime show ? "

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"I do not know," said Hicks," but I cannot imagine anyone wanting to run away."

With that we passed into the kitchen and inspected the food which the prisoners received. We tasted the soup, bread, and the meat, and it appeared very wholesome.

The Theatre

Next we went into the Prison Theatre. It was a long room, electrically lighted, and looking very sombre and drab. At the far end there was a tiny stage with some makeshift scenery. Round the walls were several portraits of Lenin, Kalinin, Marx and others. In front of the stage there was seated an orchestra of about twenty prisoners. Most of the instruments were mandolines and banjos, but there was a piano which had evidently seen better days.

"What would you like them to play for you?" asked the Commandant.

"Oh, anything," I replied. "Let them play some dance music."

The word was given to the conductor, who smartly rapped the stand and his men became alert on the instant.

They commenced playing a beautiful little Neapolitan dance. It sounded very pathetic to me, and I looked thoughtfully at the faces of the instrumentalists who were all earnestly intent on their music.

I thought to myself, "How complex a thing is crime. There does not appear to be a criminal among the lot."

It was a melancholy thought to me that these chaps, kept away from their families, were more the outcome of necessity than deliberate crime. I felt a little depressed. The music was so sad and these men were so deadly in earnest that I reflected that men who could respond to the inspiration of music could not be wholly bad. Anyhow if there is such a thing as reformative treatment for crime, the Russians are making a whole-hearted attempt to explore it to the full.

The orchestra stopped and we were very vigorous in our plaudits. They were quite appreciative of the encouragement and soon launched into a lively Russian tune. While they were playing

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we went into the bioscope room, the theatre being supplied with a cinematograph installation.

The others had gone back into the theatre while I was examining the electrical appliances, and now to my astonishment the orchestra launched forth into the "Internationale." Of all the incongruous things which one can imagine, the "Internationale" played by a prison orchestra is surely the greatest. All those present took it very seriously. The Commandant and the two officials who accompanied me rose to their feet and remained at the salute while the three verses were being played. The armed guard who was on the door did likewise, and our guide looked the embodiment of solemnity as he did likewise.

We then went out into the courtyard to have our photographs taken, also an operation performed by a prisoner. By this time it was about 6 o'clock and the prisoners came flocking out of the workshops much in the same way that one would find at any British factory during the dinner hour. They lounged about the doors with their backs to the wall smoking in little groups, and watching us with idle curiosity.

Next we saw the room where the prisoners receive their visitors. There was one man on guard on the door, but there was none of the horrible netting and cubicles that I have seen in England. If a prisoner wishes to see his relatives he can do so privately, the guard being stationed outside of the door.

Prisoners are allowed to see their relatives twice a week and for a period not exceeding half-an-hour each visit.

This concluded our inspection, and returning to the Commandant's room we said farewell.

I am not able to verify as to whether the institution we visited is typical of the Russian system, but we were assured that such was the case.

It was a remarkably interesting and educative experience, and left one with the feeling that there is an earnest desire on the part of all concerned with the administration to strive for the elevation of those unfortunates, who for its own protection the Russian Community have been reluctantly compelled to deprive of their liberty.

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The World of Labour

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RUSSIA

Trade Union Resolution of Communist Party Congress

DEALING with the tasks of the Russian trade unions in his speech at the Fourteenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party in December, 1925, Tomsky pointed to the successful growth of the trade unions and their activities on the basis of the decisions of the Eleventh Congress presided over by Lenin. The number of trade unionists increased from 5,823,000 in April, 1924, to 6,950,000 in April, 1925, and to 7,732,000 on October 1, 1925. The biggest increases are shown by the trade unions of agricultural workers (from 298,000 to 704,000 in the period mentioned above) and building workers (from 212,000 to 555,000).

In connection with the international work of the Russian unions, Tomsky commented on the successful developments under the watchword of unity of the international trade union movement. The Congress approved the international policy of the Russian trade unions in the following resolution :—

> The economic growth of the Soviet Union has afforded its trade unions the possibility of taking up the task of establishing fraternal relations with the workers of other countries, and has doubtless been decisive in influencing the attitude of these workers towards the workers and trade unions of the Soviet Union. This has again given the trade unions of the Soviet Union the possibility of raising to its full extent the question of the establishment of international trade union unity by means of the formation of a united proletarian trade union international.
>
> The enthusiastic echo awakened by the appeal of the Russian trade unions to international unity, among the workers of different countries, especially among the workers of England, and among the members of the numerous workers' delegations visiting Soviet Russia, despite all differences of political conviction and party, demonstrates the imperative necessity and supreme importance of the establishment of trade union unity among the whole international proletariat.
>
> The Party Conference approves this line of international work on the part of the Central Council of the Trade Unions of the Soviet Union, as also the energetic work being done by this body for the rallying of all adherents of unity, and expresses the conviction that the fraternal fighting alliance established between the trade unions of England and of the Soviet Union, based upon the common struggle for the unity of the international trade union movement, in the form of the Anglo-Russian Committee, as also the warmest sympathy shown by the workers and trade unions of other countries for this committee, are the first practical steps towards the establishment of international unity, and the pledge of its success.

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INDIA

All-India Trade Union Congress

THE sixth annual session of the All-India Trade Union Congress was held in Madras on January 9-10. Over a hundred delegates were present, representing nearly seventy trade unions. In the absence of the Rev. C. F. Andrews, the Congress was presided over by Mr. V. V. Giri, LL.B., the head of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway Union. In his address he reviewed the history of the chief trade unions in India and uttered a warning against strike action. He remarked :—

> It must be remembered that to organise a strike unlimited resources in money and sincere workers to lead are absolutely necessary. The capitalist can generally wait for a comparatively longer time than the labourer and break a strike.

Mr. Giri commented on the importance of organising agricultural labour and commended the efforts made by some " enlightened young men " to form educational associations among the ryots. He pointed out :—

> These organisations are not against the landed interests of the landlords in any form, and this should be made abundantly clear. If they are properly organised, they will form a happy medium in bringing about peace and harmony to both the landlord and tenant.

These two extracts are significant of the tone of the Congress. Even the capitalist newspaper, the *Bombay Chronicle*, in a leading article on the Congress, pointed out the need for more energetic work on the part of leaders of Indian Labour in organising trade unions.

Following in the path of the representatives of Indian capitalism, the Congress passed a resolution demanding immediate granting of Dominion Status for India within the British Empire. A resolution was passed for special representation of labour on Legislative Councils, but not apparently for universal suffrage or even the extension of the franchise.

Other resolutions called for (1) establishment of the eight-hour day, (2) unemployment and health insurance, (3) maternity benefits, (4) legal abolition of the system of fining workers, (5) establishment of labour exchanges, (6) establishment by law of arbitration and conciliation boards.

A special resolution dealt with the treatment of Indians in South Africa, including an appeal to the International Labour Movement to assist in preventing the Union Government from depriving Indians in Natal of their rights.

Messages of greeting were read from the British Trades Union Congress, the British Minority Movement, the Central Council of the Russian Trade Unions and from the R.I.L.O., but the only British labour representatives present were Major Graham Pole and Councillor Mellan of Glasgow, in an unofficial capacity.

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BOOK REVIEWS

BETWEEN THE MILL-STONES

The New Spirit in the European Theatre: 1914-1924. By Huntly Carter. (Ernest Benn, 25s.)

MR. HUNTLY CARTER is a phenomenon; that is to say, when one takes the broad view of him (*Sunday Worker*, LABOUR MONTHLY and all), one cannot explain him as "typical" or "symptomatic." A product of his class at every facet, he is yet in the lump an eccentric from it. He appears, in his rôle as Labour publicist, to have achieved by instinct what one should not venture to achieve unless by scientific analysis; and when we relate the words "Labour" and "scientific" to one another, we mean Marxism and all the discipline that this implies.

To achieve by instinct in the class-struggle is sometimes—for a certain period—better than no achievement at all; but it carries with it risks of every kind of misjudgment, false hope, disappointment and surprise. And here Mr. Carter *is* typical of that wide social stratum in which he moves. The book under review is typical. Subject-matter, method and author are bound inextricably together. All three spring from and illuminate, like a will o' the wisp, certain squashy irritated tendencies observable to-day on one level of our Capitalist social structure. The book is an implicit—and this review an explicit—essay on the Small Bourgeoisie of the era of Wars and Revolutions.

We live under Finance Capitalism; and the Small Bourgeoisie (professional, artistic, minor commercial sections, &c.) reacts in its peculiar way to the ordeal. In an analysis of its reactions we may turn with interest to the Theatre (one of the vehicles of Capitalist propaganda), since the Theatre is probably more sensitive to emotional moods of the small bourgeoisie than to those of any other group. Here we can observe its mind at work, in the form and content of numerous dramas, in production, in "public interest," in criticism. Hence this book. As the struggle between the two main classes intensifies, the Middle Class (that is, the loose material between the mill-stones) drags forward more fiercely than ever all its old sweet Liberal idealisms. True, there is an unpleasant crushing sensation; but one can still believe there is the "spirit of the nation" demanding to express itself adequately in such crises as wars and strikes.

When these idealists, draping themselves conjugally about such concepts as Peace, Rights of Small Peoples, or the Theatre, find nothing but ashes, they are deeply outraged. "Why," they ask, "is our spouse no longer pliable and responsive?" There can only be one answer—she has fallen into prostitution; some evil genius controls her. Armament-combines, Secret Diplomacy, the Theatre Trusts. Many cries, the same emotion behind all of them. Mr. Carter feels it badly. Being remote (except by that occasional instinct of his) from the scientific theory of the Class-war, he seems to picture a popular spirit, one and indivisible, behind all shifting tides, pleading for full expression of its dignified moods; if only the Trusts did not bar the way, and if only the Government would be less blind and invertebrate (Chaps. 2, 13, &c.).

The revenge of the small bourgeoisie on the Trusts is to show up minutely their liaisons (this is J. T. W. Newbold's position, whether he knows it or

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not); it is mere spite and usually helps to obscure the more profound implications of the struggle between the Classes. Its revenge on the "State," for not mirroring the "public spirit" in the Theatre, is to say in effect, "If *you* can't do it, we shall do it ourselves."

So Mr. Carter drives forward his treatise—ample, exhaustive and finely illustrated—through its detailed chapters on the German theatre, the revolutionary influences on the stage, the "Machine" drama, &c. There is much meat here, but it still awaits the Marxian digestion. Wars, famines, and revolutions seem to pass over without cause (stage thunderstorms, as it were); and we are made to feel that the Theatre alone matters. True, it is affected by these critical events; but that both it and they are together the results of profound economic tendencies appears nowhere to be clearly surmised. Doubts arise on every page, not as to Mr. Carter's precision, but as to his analytic judgments. One might suggest, for example, that the Trust theatre of this country reflected the war and post-war moods of the small bourgeoisie much better than Mr. Carter allows; that Toller's work expresses, not pacifism, but the emotional conflicts of the intellectual; and that a "dying Austria" could not have a truly "living theatre" (p. 178). Thus with Austria we come to the period of peace and stabilisation; and to all the recent developments in the drama.

"We'll do it ourselves," says the small bourgeois. He comes into the post-war "reconstruction" period with the crushing sensation of the Class-war tightening on his ribs. He dislikes Trusts and Strikes. He is compelled to struggle against the dissolution of his class. Enlarge his personality he must; and in the stage he finds an agreeable field of activity. The war taught him how pleasant is play-acting (Chap. 11); it is an escape from reality. Play-acting demands an audience—not too critical a one—and it may help to raise and humanise the disconcerting Lower Orders. Hence Popular Theatres, Leagues of Art Service, hordes of amateur theatrical groups, stage societies, &c. The small bourgeoisie of the Labour Party, peculiarly sensitive to the tightening of the Class-war, responds like the rest of its Class. It turns its attention to Dramatic Guilds and Choral Unions, finding in them an inoffensive field of "Socialist" activity. There is no harm. Probably such of these local Labour theatres as survive the overthrow of Capitalism can be utilised immediately by the proletariat, as in Russia (p. 223).

And at this point Mr. Carter, turning suddenly at a tangent, leads out his dark horse—the Proletariat. We applaud. He lays his money on the Proletariat. Excellent—that instinct of his, sharpened in Russia, is indubitably correct. He mounts and takes the reins—and has a few preliminary canters through the LABOUR MONTHLY and the *Sunday Worker*. We observe him narrowly. We say, "You have certainly shown us the animal's paces and wakened a crowd of us to his potentialities; but can you guide him through the course? That, Sir, demands, not instinct, but science." Drop the metaphor. What are the "risks" we referred to in the first lines of this review? They are precisely those that always await an intellectual who places himself in the vanguard of the Proletariat—by instinct alone. True, it is merely a question of the revitalisation of the Theatre—a small matter; but the principle remains the same. Here is the point; pre-revolutionary Britain is not the Russian

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Workers' Republic. Does Mr. Carter understand that between one condition and the other lies the struggle for Power? If so, he has not plainly indicated it. Can the workers achieve real Class drama during the period of pre-revolutionary conflict? That depends on a number of factors. And if these factors be unfavourable, may not Mr. Carter be as disappointed with the Proletariat as he is with the Government and with his own Class? And will he not then, like "Leftists" in other fields, complain of the Proletariat that it will not be led direct towards its historic mission?

It can all be summed up in one sharp query.

Does Mr. Carter comprehend that between the Now and the Future lies the Struggle for Power?

F. & I. C.

A REVOLUTIONARY EPIC

Ten Days that Shook the World. By John Reed. 344 pages, art paper cover, 2s. 6d. (2s. 9½d. post free). (The Communist Bookshop, 16 King Street, Covent Garden, W.C. 2.)

JOHN REED'S descriptive sketch of the opening scenes of the Soviet revolution is history portrayed with cinematographic vividness. After reading a few pages one seems to be whirled into the vortex of the revolution itself. So graphic is the writing that one does not read from page to page; one lives and moves from event to event.

The author was well equipped for his task. While a student at an American University he had thrown in his lot with the revolutionary members of the I.W.W. He was a poet rooted to the realities of the world by a study of Marx. Here, indeed, were mingled the ideal ingredients for writing the epic of the workers' first victory in their conquest of world capitalism.

The keen-eyed John Reed entered Russia in 1917 as a correspondent for an American paper. He was able to see the chaos created by the war and the Tsarist government. He was confronted, on every side, by the helpless and cowardly incompetence of Kerensky and his Right Wing Socialist ministers. These gentlemen did not destroy Tsarism; it collapsed internally through its own putrid condition when the masses pricked it. What Kerensky and his associates did was to refuse to face any of the immediate problems forced forward by the capitulation of the Tsar. Neither industry nor the land were attended to. The government seemed to be reduced to that state of palsied bewilderment which is the normal condition of the Second International when confronted with the tasks and responsibilities of government.

When Lenin and the other Communist leaders arrived in Russia, the masses were not favourably disposed towards the Bolsheviks. Lenin, by his clever and straightforward policy of always forcing forward the struggles, unmasked the cowardice and ineptitude of Kerensky and the Mensheviks. Each day in its passing verified the attitude of Lenin and showed, at the same time, that Kerensky and his Right Wing Socialist advisers were wrong. As history was moving rapidly on top gear, the very swiftness of events made things increasingly difficult for Kerensky and easier for the Communists. Thus the masses rallied to Lenin.

And what did this mean? It meant the beginning of the real battle for

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power. It meant the opening of the greatest struggle in history—the shifting of political power from the control of the propertied interests into the hands of the propertyless masses.

Kerensky and his Right Wing Socialist friends talked very gaily about Nationalisation. They were almost as blithe on this point as some of our I.L.P. friends. And like the I.L.P. they had not worked out the need for the struggle for power. Hence, when Kerensky was given office he could only accomplish, like his imitator MacDonald, a policy of capitalist continuity.

Ten Days that Shook the World is the record of the Russian workers' struggle for power. The revolutionary crisis lasted much longer than ten days. But those critical days decided the final fate of the Russian propertied interests.

John Reed's remarkable study is first of all a story ; secondly it is a history ; and thirdly it is a thesis on revolutionary struggle. Those who possessed the original expensive edition generally read it three times. One sweeps through it in the first reading ; then the second time one studies it in order to remember the important land marks in the development of the Soviet revolution. In the third reading one goes more slowly and learns important lessons from it which can be applied universally.

There are 344 pages in the book. It is a marvellous 2s. 6d. worth, which no one can afford to miss.

Wm. P.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Isvolsky and the World War. By Friedrich Steve. (George Allen & Unwin, 10s. 6d.)

The Menace of Nationalism in Education. By J. French Scott. (George Allen & Unwin, 6s. 6d.)

On Education, Especially in Early Childhood. By Bertrand Russell. (George Allen & Unwin, 6s.)

An End to Poverty. By Fritz Wittels. Translated by Eden and Cedar Paul. (George Allen & Unwin, 5s.)

Bench and Bar: A Searchlight. By William Durran, late A.M.I.E.E. Foreword by Professor F. Soddy, M.A., F.R.S. (George Allen & Unwin, 6s.)

The International Anarchy, 1904-1914. By G. Lowes Dickinson. (George Allen & Unwin, 17s. 6d.)

The Classics and the Plain Man. By the Rt. Hon. Stanley Baldwin, M.P. (John Murray, 6d.)

The Just Price: A Financial Policy for the Independent Labour Party. By W. T. Symons and Fred Tait. (The Labour Literature Depot, 6d.)

Russia's Path to Communism. By G. Zinoviev. (Communist Party of Great Britain, 1s.)

The Ruhr-Lorraine Industrial Problem. By Guy Greer. (Allen & Unwin, 8s. 6d.)

Wealth and Taxable Capacity of India. By Professor K. T. Shah. (P. S. King & Son, 16s.)

Basic Principles of Scientific Socialism. By A. S. Sachs. (The Rand School of Social Science.)

The Case of Bituminous Coal. By Walton H. Hamilton and Helen R. Wright. (Allen & Unwin, 8s. 6d.)

Where is Britain Going? By Leon Trotsky. (Communist Party of Great Britain, 2s. 6d.)

American Foreign Investments. By Robert W. Dunn. (Viking Press, $5.00.)

Selected Essays. Karl Marx. (Parsons, 4s. 6d.)

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THE
PLEBS
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The Coal Crisis
By A. J. Cook, S. O. Davies, F. Ratcliffe, G. J. Williams, A. Evans, and other *Miners*.

Twice Dead: A Sketch of the Bavarian Revolution
By Ernst Toller.

The History of Miners' Trade Unionism
By J. Hamilton.

Christianity and the Class Struggle—II
By Philips Price.

The T.U.C.'s Labour College Scheme
By J. F. H.

Reviews, Correspondence, &c.

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